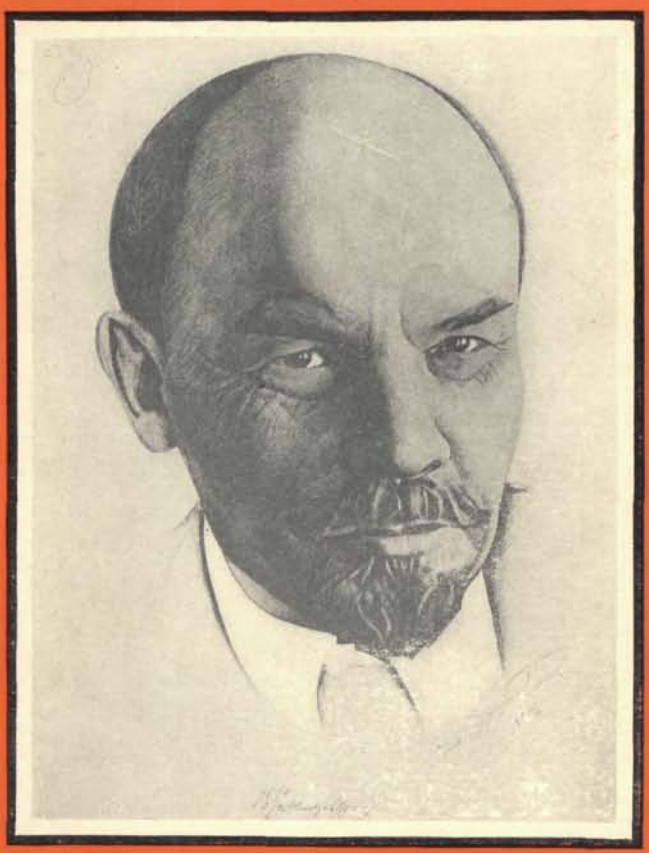
BROWDER ON THEORY AND METHODS OF WORK

# The COMMUNIST

## JANUARY 1939



V. I. LENIN, 1870-1924

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A NEW MAGAZINE—

# NATIONAL ISSUES

A SURVEY OF POLITICS AND LEGISLATION

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Editor, GENE DENNIS

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# The COMMUNIST

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE U.S.A.
*EDITORS: EARL BROWDER, ALEX BITTELMAN, V. J. JEROME*

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# REVIEW OF THE MONTH

*On the Fifteenth Anniversary of Lenin's Death. Studying the Living Science of Marxism-Leninism. Prepare for Book of 100,000 Copies. Browder's Report to National Committee on Social and National Security. Chamber of Commerce Wants Strictly Armaments. National Interests and National Betrayal. Who Will Defend Nation's Liberties? Absolute Pacifism Spells Capitulation. The* New York Post *Is Only Mildly Surprised. Defending Nation and Defending Imperialism. Social Content of National Interests. Democratic and Anti-fascist. Armaments and Guarantees. Who Dominates Republican Party? Friction Within and Pressure From Below. To the Single Democratic Front for 1940. Organizing Masses at the Bottom. Role of a Communist Branch. Lessons of France and Collective Security. A Book by James W. Ford.*

ON THE twenty-first day of this month it will be fifteen years since Lenin died. And although Lenin and his teachings are always present in our thoughts and deeds, the anniversary of his death—the Lenin days—serves as a fresh stimulus for deeper study of Marxism-Leninism and for rededication to the cause which is guided by this theory.

Soon there will be available the American edition of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,* prepared by the Central Committee of that Party with the closest collaboration of Comrade Stalin. And this is very fortunate. For with this book, the most authoritative exposition of the history and development of Leninism, as it were—Leninism in action—tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands in our country will have the opportunity of studying Marxism-Leninism at its very source and to gain the great advantages which the mastery of this theory gives to the labor movement.

The National Committee of the Communist Party of the United States decided at its last plenary meeting, held in New York City, December 3-5, 1938, upon the proposal of Comrade Browder, to publish and distribute a minimum of 100,000 copies of this book at a price not to exceed the physical cost of production. At a price which should enable the worker of the lowest income to acquire a copy of this book for individual use. To acquire it, to have it, to study it. Because every worker will need it, especially those who are active and leading in the progressive mass movements of the people.

It will be the task and duty of the membership and organizations of the Communist Party in the coming months to organize and carry through the distribution of the minimum of 100,000 copies of this book. It will



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also be the task of the Party organizations to organize their educational facilities in such a way as to lend the utmost encouragement and assistance to all individual and group studies of the great lessons to be learned from the glorious history of our brother Party in the Soviet Union.

To learn these lessons is to learn to master the theory of Marxism-Leninism. It is to learn what Marxism represents in the present epoch of the world's history, in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, in the epoch which has seen the victory of socialism on one-sixth of the earth. For Marxism is not a dogma, dead and frozen, but a living and growing science. After the death of Engels, Marx's closest collaborator, it was Lenin who moved the Marxist theory further, enriching it with the new experience derived from the new conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat. And after the death of Lenin, it was Stalin and the other disciples of Lenin who were pushing forward and enriching the Marxist theory.

It is not always so that opportunism makes its appearance through directly challenging the validity of the Marxian theory as a whole or of some of its propositions and conclusions. This is opportunism, of course, and with this manifestation of it we have become pretty well familiar. Yet there is also another manifestation of opportunism, and one of which we are insufficiently aware. It is the attempt to make us hang onto certain individual propositions of Marxism which have become obsolete by transforming these propositions into dogmas. And for what purpose? For the purpose of *halting* the further development of Marxism and, with this, to halt the further development of the revolutionary movement of the working class.

The great achievement of Lenin and, after him, of Stalin is that they have smashed all attempts to freeze and halt the further development of the Marxian theory and of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. They have carried *forward* the revolutionary science of the working class—of the most advanced class in society—to our present day, young, alive and actual, the indispensable guide to progress and to the eventual victory of socialism everywhere.

A study of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union brings to our minds two outstanding instances of this kind. Up until the second bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, in February, 1917, Marxists held the opinion that the parliamentary democratic republic was the most appropriate political form for the period of transition from capitalism to socialism. Even though Marx had indicated, already in the 1870's, that the political form of the type of the Paris Commune was the most appropriate political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat, this idea did not find further development in Marx's subsequent work and was thus allowed to be forgotten. Besides, there was Engels' authoritative declaration in 1891 that the democratic republic constitutes the specific form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this was the leading idea on the question prevailing among Marxists, including Lenin.

However, in 1905 and in February,

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1917, the Russian Revolution brought forward a new political form—the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. Analyzing the meaning of this new political form on the basis of the experiences of two revolutions, and proceeding from the theory of Marxism, Lenin reached the conclusion that the best political form for the dictatorship of the proletariat was not the parliamentary democratic republic but the Republic of Soviets. Whereupon the opportunists of all countries, hanging onto the parliamentary republic, were accusing Lenin of departing from Marxism and of destroying democracy. What has life proved? It has proved that Lenin was the true Marxist; that it was he who was carrying the revolutionary science and movement forward while the opportunists were pulling both of them backward, transforming one of the propositions of the theory into a dogma.

Or another example. Studying pre-imperialist capitalism, Marx and Engels had reached the conclusion that the socialist revolution cannot win in one country taken by itself, that it can win only by a simultaneous attack in all or in the majority of the civilized countries. This conclusion, reached in the middle of the nineteenth century, later became a leading idea for all Marxists. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, pre-imperialist capitalism had grown over into imperialist capitalism. From a rising system, capitalism had become transformed into a dying one. Seeing this and studying it, and proceeding from the theory of Marx, Lenin came to the conclusion that the old formula of Engels and Marx no longer corresponded to the new historical setting; that the socialist revolution is fully able to win in one country taken by itself.

And again the opportunists of all lands, hanging onto the old formula of Engels and Marx, were accusing Lenin of departing from Marxism. But life has already proven that it was Lenin who had mastered Marxism, not the opportunists; that it was Lenin who moved the Marxian theory forward, enriching it with new experiences, while the opportunists were pulling it backward, transforming the living science into a frozen dogma.

It was in the spirit of this creative Marxism — Marxism-Leninism — that the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935 formulated a new strategic line to meet serious changes in the world situation. Here, too, the opportunists everywhere, led by the Trotsky-Lovestone agents of fascism, were denouncing us for abandoning Marx and Lenin. And short as this span of years still is, life has already shown that it was Stalin and the other disciples of Lenin who are the true Marxists, those who carry *forward* the theory of Marxism-Leninism and, with it, the progressive and revolutionary movements of the working class and its allies.

The recently concluded meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party, deliberating on the very practical and immediate tasks facing the working class and all democratic forces of America consequent upon the results of the last elections and of the Munich conspiracy, sought consciously to be guided by this creative, forward-looking and forward-moving

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theory of Marxism-Leninism. Led by Comrades Browder and Foster, the National Committee aimed to make the December plenary meeting a stage in the mastery of the Marxist-Leninist theory. It thus aimed with its political and organizational decisions to enable our Party to be of greater service to the further progress of our class and people.

Thus we honor Lenin on the fifteenth anniversary of his death.

* * *

REPORTING from Washington, D.C. to *The New York Times,* Turner Catledge finds that "certain key men in the Congressional organization" are determined to see to it that the national defense plans which the administration intends to submit to the first session of the 76th Congress "shall be studied strictly in the light of military and naval protection, and nothing else." And lest the reader fail to get the full import of this proposed "strict" examination, Mr. Catledge adds the following:

"This last qualification is aimed at any attempt on the part of the President's Left-wing subordinates to turn the program into a new spending-lending drive."

Now the thing is clearer. It is also clear that these "key men," whoever they may be, pretty accurately reflect the position of the United States Chamber of Commerce which has let it be known that additional measures for national defense must not be allowed to be used "as a disguise" for the further pump-priming of the economic system.

It is not known yet at this writing what exactly are the plans of the administration on matters of national defense. So, detailed comment on this must of necessity be reserved for subsequent issues. But the international and national setting in which this problem arises is already fully indicated. It was on the basis of a thorough analysis of this setting that Comrade Browder has formulated a line of policy for both domestic and foreign affairs which was adopted unanimously by the National Committee of the Communist Party. A policy which calls for the unity of the American working class within a united and single democratic front in the struggle *for the social and national security of the American people.*

For the social *and* national security of the American people, and vice versa. We urge an attitude and policy of diametric opposition to that of the Chamber of Commerce and of Mr. Catledge's "key men." Analyzing the situation in our country as it is shaped by the results of the last elections and by the consequences of the Munich conspiracy, we say with Comrade Browder:

"Our first conclusion must be, therefore, that in the world situation after Munich we cannot adopt a negative position to the question of armaments.

"Neither can we, however, meet the new situation with a simple affirmative. No matter how much the situation has changed, it still remains true—more true than ever—that armaments are no substitute for a positive peace policy, for a correct approach and active role in organizing the world against the war-makers and therefore for peace. The question is not: are we for armaments, yes or no; it is the more complicated question, 'Armaments, for what?' If it is for the defense of the liberty and independence of our own and other peoples, yes, emphatically yes! But the people must learn to make its 'Yes' a power for securing guarantees that the arma-

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ments will be for that purpose and for no other." *

As the reader will see, this is no policy of "strictly" armaments as advocated by the Chamber of Commerce and Hoover and some of the anti-New Deal Democrats. It is a policy for the working class and all progressive forces to meet *in a democratic and anti-fascist way* the real problems of national security as they face the American people today in all aspects: social, economic, political and military.

Herbert Hoover, and the under-Secretary of State in his administration, William R. Castle, do not believe that the American people are now facing new and serious problems of national security. Nor do these gentlemen believe that the nation is facing any problems of social security. To them everything is, and has been, perfectly secure, socially and nationally, the only disturbing thing being the New Deal, labor, the democracy of the people and its growing assertiveness. And to eliminate this, all that has to be done is to bring Hooverism back into the government.

Thus, William R. Castle, speaking on inter-American problems, is reported by *The New York Herald Tribune* to have said the following:

"He criticized also the proposal for a larger armament program, declaring that military aggression in Latin America by totalitarian powers was 'a danger really non-existent.'" (Dec. 8.)

"A danger non-existent"—that is well put. It is exactly what Hitler, Mussolini and Japan tell us. But the American people will hardly be fooled by that. Nor by Hoover and Castle. Nor by the fascist priest, Coughlin. The danger of military *invasion* may not be immediate in terms of days or months but the actuality of military aggression by the fascist powers in other parts of the world which, unless halted, will lead to military invasions also in the Americas—this danger is already in existence. And only totally uninformed and blind ones or, on the other hand, pro-fascists can deny this fact. Hoover and Castle cannot be classified either with the uninformed or with the blind.

The task of meeting the problems of social and national security—and the two are today inseparable—resolves itself therefore first of all into a task of promoting further the united struggle of the people against the reactionary, imperialistic and pro-fascist circles of Big Business for whom Hooverism is speaking. It is the task of curbing the capitulators to fascism at home. Because this is what Hooverism is: capitulation to fascism.

Naturally, no spokesman of the reactionary monopolies will openly own up to being a capitulator to fascism. Nor do Chamberlain and Daladier, for that matter. Yet when the United States Chamber of Commerce and "certain key men" in Congress launch an attack under the slogan of "strictly armaments," with no monkey-shines about social security and pump-priming of the economic system, with no relation to a democratic and anti-fascist foreign policy, with no guarantees that the arms will be used to resist fascist aggression and maintain democracy and peace, without any measures to cleanse the armed forces of the

* Earl Browder, *Social and National Security*, pp. 39-40. Workers Library Publishers, New York.

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country (and other agencies of government) of all reactionary and pro-fascist influences, with no provisions to finance increased armaments by heavier taxation of the monopolies and the rich—when we see this sort of reactionary campaign around the question of national defense, we should have little difficulty in recognizing that *this is the further unfolding of the policy of pro-fascism and capitulation to fascism.* A policy fostered by the most reactionary and imperialistic circles of the American bourgeoisie.

Nor should there be difficulty in recognizing the true objective meaning of the cry raised by certain pacifist groups (in which, by the way, Trotsky-Lovestoneite fascist agents are very active). It is the cry that raising the issue of national security in a new way, made imperative by the consequences of the Munich conspiracy, is only "hysteria," that there are no new dangers, that the best we can do for democracy and peace in Latin America is "to show the American countries a working democracy here and lend a hand to help them raise their living standards." Nice sounding words which may still fool some people, but not for long, we hope.

For it is becoming increasingly evident to all that democracy here can be made to work only if we are prepared to resist the advance of fascism here and the coming of fascist aggression from abroad. That is, unless it is realized that the most reactionary and imperialistic circles of the American bourgeoisie, like their counterpart in England and France, are following a policy of pro-fascism and national betrayal, that consequently it devolves upon the working class and all democratic forces of the people to wage a fight for democracy and national independence, that one can no longer be waged without the other. Unless this is recognized by the people and acted upon accordingly, the gate to fascism in this country will be thrown wide open. And this the people will not agree to do.

It has been true before Munich, but is now doubly true, that social security and democracy cannot be separated from national security. It is one great struggle, although having many aspects and phases. To try to separate the two, and to place one against another, *is to undermine both: the social security of the masses and the national security of the country.* Whether this is done through the slogan of "strictly armaments," as the Chamber of Commerce and Hoover propose, or through the slogan of "strictly social security and democracy at home," as some pacifists are doing (encouraged by the Lovestone-Trotskyites), the result is the same. It is giving aid and comfort to fascism. It is endangering the social and national security of the American people.

As against this, the Communist Party urges a policy of struggle for social and national security.

* * *

THE *New York Post,* a paper that thinks it is liberal and perhaps is so in a general way, tries to amuse its readers with what it pleases to call "a complete reversal of the old 'party line.'" Shall we say that its presented amusement is the measure of its liberal earnestness?

To say, as the *Post* does, that the

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Communists, out of a blue sky, came out in favor of "heavy armaments for the United States" and that this constitutes a "complete reversal" of the Party's previous position is a plain distortion of the truth. It is also a case of that "headline mentality" of which President Roosevelt spoke just recently. Perhaps a careful reading of Comrade Browder's report would help the *Post* to get straightened out.

And then it may not help at all. We shouldn't be surprised, either mildly or otherwise, if the *Post* were to accuse us of defending the interests of American imperialism. It has happened before on the pages of that paper, and it may happen again. The Trotskyites and Lovestoneites are already doing so and the *Post* has on occasion shown a remarkable susceptibility to the machinations of these agents of Hitler and Mussolini and the Mikado.

The National Committee of the Communist Party has definitely said something new on the question of national security and armaments. And in doing so, it had no need to reverse any previous Party position on the question. It only had to develop it *further,* to concretize it more, in order to meet the *new* problems and new dangers resulting from the Munich conspiracy and its consequences.

For at the bottom of our present position on armaments lies the basic idea that, in the face of the present stage of fascist war aggression and the capitulatory policies of the reactionary bourgeoisie to fascism, it is the task of the working class "to head the liberation struggle of the enslaved nations and the defense of the peoples threatened by foreign domination." (Manifesto of the Communist International of November 7.)

The working class of America has to view the question of armaments from this standpoint. In this too there is something new, no doubt, but only a headline mentality would see in it a "reversal." Serious-minded and thoughtful persons would know that this line of action is already contained in the strategic *anti-fascist* line formulated by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. The consequences of Munich to the world and to our country have made necessary the bringing out of that line of action into central prominence. Moreover, it follows inevitably from the fundamental principles of Communism.

We have said, since 1935, that the main enemy is fascism and have called upon the working class to head the struggle of the people against it. Since fascism was threatening not only the class interests of the proletariat, but also the most vital interests of the farmers and middle classes, endangering the liberty and independence of whole peoples and nations, we called upon the working class to step forward as the most consistent defender of all these interests. And when the Munich conspiracy had demonstrated before the whole world that the imperialist circles of the bourgeoisie in England and France entered into a counter-revolutionary alliance with German and Italian fascism, with these circles in all bourgeois-democratic countries ( including the United States) following a policy of capitulation and moving to similar alliances, we concluded correctly that the working class, the backbone of the

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nation, must head the struggle of the people and save the nation from the capitulators at home and the fascist aggression that is coming from abroad.

The thing that makes possible such a front of anti-fascist struggle is the peculiar present-day coincidence and merger of the class interests of the proletariat with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people —with the nation. Says Comrade Dimitroff:

"It would be difficult in post-war political history to find another moment when the interests of the working class, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, when the interests of the small nations, of the dependent and colonial countries, when the interests of culture and science, the interests of peace and democracy, *coincided and merged in a common current against fascism,* the worst enemy of mankind, *such as at the present moment.*" *

"Coincided and merged in a common current against fascism"—this is the key to our policy of struggle for the social and national security of the American people. And what kind of a struggle is it? It is a struggle "against fascist barbarism and the incendiaries of imperialist war" (Dimitroff). It is a struggle to curb the most imperialistic and reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie at home, the capitulators to fascism and betrayers of the national interests of the people. And it is from here that our present position on armaments follows.

The Trotsky-Lovestone agents of fascism, in the service of the incendiaries and promoters of the now current second imperialist war (a "one-sided" imperialist war thus far, waged by the fascist powers), seeking to confuse their traces, are crying that it is the Communists who are calling upon the workers to defend the interests of American imperialism. But the facts speak for themselves. The Communists call upon the workers to head the struggles of the people *against* the incendiaries of the imperialist war, *against* the imperialistic circles of the American bourgeoisie which are urging a policy of capitulation to and alliance with the war-makers.

*We are advocating a policy of struggle against the imperialist war, against the fascist war-makers and against the imperialistic circles of the bourgeoisie at home.* The fight against the latter is the primary condition for the success of the struggle against the former.

It might be said that since this is not a socialist country, the *content* of the struggle for the national interests and security of the American people is not socialist either. This would be true only in a limited sense. It would be true in the sense that, *directly and immediately,* the present struggle for the national security of America is not a struggle for the establishment of socialism in this country. It is a struggle to bar the road to fascism in this country and to help defeat its aggressions abroad, the two being today inseparable. *The content of national interests here and now is therefore anti-fascist and democratic.* In this sense, and only in this sense, it is not directly and immediately socialist in content. This is fundamental and central in the present world situation and unclarity on this point would be harmful.

* See *The Communist International,* p. 977, No. 11. Workers Library Publishers, New York.

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Yet this is not the whole story. We must also consider *the character of the epoch* in which this anti-fascist struggle is taking place. It is taking place in the epoch of *dying capitalism*. of proletarian revolutions, *of the victory of socialism on one-sixth of the earth*. This imparts certain special significance to the anti-fascist and democratic struggle for the national security of America. It makes it very definitely a *stage* in the historic process of struggle for socialism in this country. It makes it furthermore a decisive factor in the process of development toward world socialism. And linking itself up, as it does, with the fight of the Soviet peoples for the defense of their socialist system and achievements, the struggle for the national security of the American people establishes an additional new relationship. By defending our national security and democracy against fascism we are helping the Soviet peoples to defend their socialist achievements from foreign aggression; and the Soviet peoples, by resisting fascist aggression against themselves and leading in the general fight of all peoples against fascism, are contributing materially and substantially to our own fight for democracy and national security.

We can now sum up on this point as follows: The immediate and direct content of our present-day struggle for the social and national security of America is anti-fascist and democratic. Taken in its broader historic aspects, conditioned by the character of the present epoch, it is a struggle for democracy, peace and socialism.

Here it can legitimately be asked: what about our present government? Can it be depended on to employ armaments only in the cause of peace and democracy by resisting fascist aggression? This is an important question which the Communist Party has raised and answered. In doing so, it proceeded from the idea that "governments are necessary that base themselves on the masses of the people, that reckon with their interests and wishes, governments that are ready to fight against the fascist enemy from without." *(Ibid.)* All this is to be taken in connection with the other essential, namely, "that reaction at home be curbed, . . . that the policy of capitulation to the fascist aggressors be stopped." *(Ibid.)*

These are the guiding propositions. On this basis, Comrade Browder said in his report: "If it is for the defense of liberty and independence of our own and other people, yes, emphatically yes. But the people must learn to make its 'Yes' *a power* for securing *guarantees* that the armaments will be for that purpose and no other."

In the foregoing we have already indicated the nature of these guarantees. Here we wish to continue on the relationship of our people and government. And so, we say: to a government of the Chamberlain type, our answer would be an emphatic *"No."* And this needs no elaboration. But our present government is not of the Chamberlain type. This is clear. It is also clear that it does not yet base itself *fully* on the masses of the people, nor does it yet reckon *fully* with their interests and wishes, nor has it as yet fully demonstrated its readiness to fight the fascist enemy from without. For these serious inadequacies

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there are two main reasons of different origin. One is the presence of reactionary and pro-fascist influences within the government, *the very elements which are sabotaging and obstructing the progressive measures and initiatives of President Roosevelt and his administration.*

The second is the insufficient *organized* backing of the people for an active policy of democracy and peace, the insufficient struggles of the masses *themselves* for such a policy. In brief, the lack of a sufficiently united and coordinated practical concert of action of all progressive forces, the lack of a united and organized single democratic front fighting unitedly on a consistent program and rallying the majority of the people behind it *at the bottom.*

The result is an administration in the government which, though committed to a number of central policies deserving active support by the people and generally supported by the majority, is in practice moving haltingly and, at times, very inconsistently, yet moving in the direction the people desire. That is why our Party says with Comrade Browder: *make your "yes" on the question of armaments an organized power of such strength as will be able to secure all those political, economic and social guarantees as are necessary, in order that our government base itself fully on the masses of the people, reckon with their interests and wishes, and is fully ready to fight against the fascist enemy from without.*

* * *

ALTHOUGH we knew it right along as did many others, it is good nevertheless to have it freshly and publicly confirmed. Namely, that the spokesmen of the reactionary monopolies continue to dominate the Republican Party.

Commenting on the election of du Pont's darling, former Senator Daniel O. Hastings of Delaware, to the executive of the Republican National Committee as against Kenneth F. Simpson of New York, *The Herald Tribune* writes:

> "Nothing could be plainer than that the standpatters are still powerful in the party and have still to learn their first lesson in progress." (Nov. 30, 1938.)

This inner fight in the Republican Party tops, of which we shall see much more as we go along, has of course important political significance. It reflects directly certain frictions and differences within Big Business itself. Less directly it reflects the more evident fact that large sections of the traditional supporters of the Republican Party among the masses are totally fed up with the "standpatters" and are reaching out, very confusedly as yet, as shown by the last elections, after more progressive leadership. This last point is of extreme importance and, properly approached with the policy of the single democratic front, can become a source of great reinforcement to the camp of progress in this country. The danger, however, is that the "liberal face" tactic will succeed in corraling these progressive Republican followers, keeping them attached to the Republican Party which is still dominated by the "standpatters" according to the admission of *The Herald Tribune* itself.

It is a real danger. Therefore, when we see the liberal face tacticians in the Republican Party making so

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much fuss over their internal struggles with the "standpatters," we should be aware of at least two angles of the situation. One is that friction within Big Business is increasing as is also progressive pressure from below. And that it is all to the good because it offers greater opportunities to the forces of the democratic front to increase their strength.

The second is that, due to the increased activities of the liberal face tacticians in the Republican Party, new illusions may spring up among the followers of that party that the old G.O.P. is going to become a young, new and progressive force in the country. And this is precisely the impression the *Herald Tribune* is trying to create.

To put it perhaps more plainly: The fight between the Hoover crowd, on the one hand, and the Landon-Dewey-*Herald Tribune* crowd, on the other, is no mere shadow boxing, as already indicated above. It offers increased opportunity therefore for bringing the progressive moving sections of the Republican Party into the single democratic front which alone can insure a people's victory in 1940. But the realization of this opportunity will be endangered if the Dewey crowd succeeds in convincing large masses of the people that the G.O.P. is becoming "young, new and progressive." For it is quite possible that the reactionary monopolies may try to win in 1940 with a Dewey if they become convinced that they cannot win with a Hoover. In fact, it is most likely to happen this way if the forces of the democratic front do not achieve by that time the necessary unity of action. And that unity must be built today, throughout the current year, *utilizing to the utmost the important municipal elections that are nearing.*

Basic of course is the promotion of the struggle for labor unity. The difficulty residing in the opposition of the reactionaries in the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. must and can be overcome if only the unity forces in the A. F. of L. would grow more assertive and articulate and if the cooperative actions between the unions of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. would be developed widely and extensively.

Fundamental also is a line of action stressed much by the National Committee of the Communist Party, looking toward greater concentration of efforts on the building of the democratic front *among the masses,* among their mass organizations in the communities and localities, at the bottom, in the course of their struggle for better conditions, for progressive legislation, in municipalities, states and nationally. Comrades Browder and Foster outlined a course of activities on this score which promises great success for the progressive forces of the country.

And here it becomes at once evident that the branches and units of the Communist Party can play a particularly useful and indispensable role. To project before the masses of their respective neighborhoods, localities, communities and shops the idea of united struggles and actions on their immediate burning needs, to help the various progressive forces get together for that purpose, to help formulate programs (legislative and others) to meet the special needs of

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the community—to engage systematically in all these activities is for a branch and unit of the Communist Party task number one at the present time. It needs no elaborate argumentation to see that only thus can a Party unit make itself of real help and service to the people, function as a real vanguard in its jurisdiction, and attract to itself and into the Party the best elements of the masses. Let all our branches and units begin to engage *systematically* in such local and neighborhood political activities and they will promptly discover the great help which the Party press can render in such work and thus begin to solve the acute problem of extending the circulation of our papers.

Given a clear line of action as well as perspective, as these emerged from the recent meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party, every Party organization can confidently proceed to build the single democratic front in its respective territory as well as generally and to build *itself* within the democratic front.

Outlining the perspective for 1940, Comrade Browder said:

> "The candidate who will lead the liberal and progressive camp to victory in 1940 will certainly have to be such a person as would be fully acceptable to Roosevelt, LaGuardia and Lewis, and their supporters. This is the way to the organized single democratic front which will include the unions of the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., the farmers, the New Deal forces, the progressive followers of the Republican Party and all independent progressive movements of the people." *

Everything from now on must be done in such a way as to prepare and insure the victory in the crucial struggle of 1940.

* * *

IT HAS already been noted by several progressive commentators that the very people in this country who attack the Roosevelt administration for its "high-handed" methods in dealing with Big Business expressed positive delight with the "vigorous" and "determined" way in which Daladier was trying to handle labor in France. In this there is great significance for labor in America, and for the people generally. It demonstrated afresh what has been known to all informed persons, that the thing Big Business reaction in this country objects to is not "excessive power in government" *but the political and social uses to which this power is put.* If it is used against the people, it is good. But if it is used against Big Business to protect the people, then it is bad. The American working class and its allies should be enabled to draw from this all the necessary conclusions.

And another thing. By applauding Daladier, Big Business reaction in this country placed its stamp of approval not only upon dictatorial and anti-democratic methods in government but also upon a foreign policy of national betrayal. Because Daladier's foreign policy is a policy which betrays the interests of France. It is a policy of agreement with international fascism against the French people. And, observing the delight of the most reactionary circles of the American bourgeoisie with Daladier's conduct and with Chamberlain's, it should be evident to all that the reactionary bourgeoisie in the United

* *Social and National Security*, p. 19.

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States also is moving along the path of agreement with international fascism against the American people.

Yet a serious disappointment awaits those who hastily assume that the French people are done for and that all that remains of France is its reactionary bourgeoisie and Daladier. No; one should not hurry with such conclusion. The French working class is still alive and more so than for a long time. The general strike has demonstrated that fact beyond doubt. At the time of Munich, reaction apparently succeeded in confusing somewhat the ranks of the workers. But the strike proved that this confusion is disappearing. The strike has undoubtedly strengthened the unity of labor, preparing it for the battles to come. The people of France, headed by a united working class, will yet be heard from in unmistakable terms. And so will the people of England.

For us in the United States, this has many meanings. It means that, in the struggle for democracy and peace, in the fight against the offensive of international fascism, the American people can count on collaboration with the peoples of France and England. Not with the treacherous policies of the Chamberlains and Daladiers but with the democratic policies of resistance to fascism which the peoples of these two countries, headed by their working classes, are struggling to make the policies of their countries.

And, then, the Soviet Union. All signs point to the fact that wide circles of the American people are reaching the conclusion that friendship and collaboration with the Soviet Union must become one of the foundation stones of American foreign policy. America needs this collaboration in order to struggle successfully for peace, in order to protect effectively its national interests.

Discussing the question at the recent meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party, Comrade Browder said:

"I am not a spokesman for the Soviet Union. The Communist Party of the U.S.A. is not, as the slanderous demagogue Martin Dies charges, 'an agency of Moscow.' But I am an American as well as a Communist, and with the whole American Party, I can and do claim the Soviet Union as the reliable friend of our nation and our people, and propose in the American national interest that we should seek the cooperation of the Soviet Union in the world crisis in which we find ourselves." *

National security through collective security, through collaboration with the peoples of the Americas, with the peoples of France and England and, above all, with the Soviet Union, the most dependable and reliable fighter for peace, democracy and progress.

* * *

Speaking of the growth of the liberation movement of the Negro people, Comrade Browder had this to say of Comrade James W. Ford, at the recent meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party.

"When we express our joy at the outstanding achievements of Comrade Ford, for example, can there be a single Negro comrade or sympathizer who fails to see in this the registration of an achievement for the whole Negro people? When we demonstratively establish the authority of Comrade Ford's words for the entire Party with those of any other leader, and place upon him the same strict responsibilities borne by every other

* *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

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Party spokesman, can anyone fail to recognize in this the actual realization of equality, not only formally and in words, but in fact and in deed, an equality not presented to Comrade Ford but earned by him?" *

Those who have the good fortune to know and work with Comrade Ford will readily subscribe to this tribute. But also others, not so situated, now have the opportunity to know James W. Ford and to learn more intimately of what the modern Negro liberation movement stands for. We refer to his new book, *The Negro People and the Democratic Front.** It is a product of thought and action in the great progressive movements of our time. It is a most valuable help to Communists and non-Communists alike for clearer understanding and more effective practical activity.

A. B.

* *Ibid.*, p. 34.

* Published by International Publishers, New York.

"Unity of the majority of the people in the democratic front requires, as its foundation and main driving force, unity of the working class. But that does not mean that we must first achieve perfect working class unity, and only then take up the task of welding the democratic front. On the contrary, the two tasks are solved in practice simultaneously, and every step in progress in either field helps and strengthens the work in the other. Every factor that forwards the general democratic front makes easier the achievement of more working class unity, and every step to unite new and larger strata of the workers pushes forward the democratic front. Thus, an essential feature of the struggle for working class unity is the establishment of a correct and consistent attitude toward all the allies and potential allies of the working class in the democratic front. A cooperative relationship with the farmers and city middle classes, and especially with the politically most active groups of progressives, is a basic necessity in the struggle for working class unity."—Earl Browder, *Social and National Security*, p. 14.

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# MASTERY OF THEORY AND METHODS OF WORK*

BY EARL BROWDER

I THINK, comrades, in closing this important plenum of our National Committee, we need only to note a few points for special emphasis. There has been no difference of opinion disclosed in the three days of discussion which need any solution. We have had a discussion here which I think has been quite correctly described as representing a new high level of the work of our committee. I think the work of these last three days has registered what is going on throughout the country. There could be no meeting such as we have had except as the expression of a growing Party, living and working in the very heart of the American people and representing its most dynamic element.

There have been so many outstanding contributions to our discussion that it is difficult to pick out any single one for special mention without running the risk of injustice to others equally good. It would be impossible, however, to summarize our discussions without mentioning the contribution of Comrade Schneiderman which reflected the great work of our California Party, the work of which is better than any thesis in showing us the road to victory. Our comrades in California proved their thesis in life, and there is nothing that confirms the correctness of policy so much as to have it result in victory. Victory is what we are driving for everywhere. And in those places where victory is most decisive, especially when it is a victory won under most adverse conditions, this has great lessons for every section of our Party. This experience in California was well and graphically presented by Comrade Schneiderman.

I think that we have much to learn also from the continued study of the experiences of our Party in the state of Washington, which has made such great advances under the leadership of Comrade Raport. These sections of our Party which showed the most decisive advances must become the objectives of detailed study by all of us. I know that last summer, when Comrade Stachel and I made a visit to the Pacific Coast, we came back from there with the feeling that we had learned new things about America. We gave the experience of the Pacific Coast very prolonged and detailed study. We are continuing that study, and I think that all of us throughout

* Concluding speech at the plenary session of the National Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., in New York, December 5, 1938.



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the Party can very profitably do the same.

We had a most interesting contribution from Oklahoma. But I wonder how many of us felt the tremendous significance of the reported campaigns of reactionary demagogy current in Oklahoma. What is this situation in Oklahoma? It is the complete disintegration of the economic, political, social and cultural life of the people of a section of the country, a disintegration out of which nothing appears yet to lead and organize the people. And yet it would be a great mistake to overemphasize that absence of leadership as yet, because, in spite of everything, the tremendous ferment of the population of Oklahoma that expresses itself in such fantastic forms at times surely has as yet its main orientation on the progressive policies of the New Deal. It is not organized; it has no local leadership that can bring it together, and restore on a new basis the lost social stability.

What conclusions must we draw when we face such situations? That we have a tremendous job to do in such territories. And there are many of these territories in the United States, not always embracing a whole state; but in every state we have communities in the same condition. We must begin to get into these communities more than we have, and we must carry to them the things that these people are looking for, first of all principled politics and cultural life. When we take these things to them we will quickly become a power in these communities.

I think it would be necessary also for us to say a word of emphasis on the participation of the young people in the growing mass movements of the country, in all phases. Everyone is paying great attention to the youth nowadays, because the youth is active, youth is in motion; the young people will go where they find serious response to their demands and their needs, and recognition of their place in society and in the particular mass movements which deal with them. We do not yet give sufficient response to the youth, although we are doing better than before. It is necessary to emphasize this. This is also true of the growing participation of women in political life, and we must constantly keep every section of our organization sensitive to the special requirements of these particular groups.

In my report, I did not take up that question which was a central point in the Tenth Convention—our approach to the Catholics and work among them. This received very correct emphasis from many of the speakers here, and I think that we should register that since the Tenth Convention we have made considerable progress and gained very important experience in this; but still we are only scratching the surface of the possibilities.

We have learned that the Reverend Currans and Father Coughlins do not represent the American people. Neither do they represent the Catholic Church. They are the lunatic fringe of the Catholic community. It is a grave mistake to treat them as representatives of the Catholic Church. We should defend the Catholics against such an imputation and not make it ourselves. Particularly at this moment, when the Catholic Church itself is undergoing the most

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profound heart-searching and reorientation in world and domestic questions, we must get close to the Catholics, sympathetically close to them, and assist them in their reorientation. There is information that indicates that not only is the Catholic Church in profound struggle with the Hitler regime, but that the whole Catholic Church may be in open struggle against Mussolini in the very near future. More and more, world Catholicism finds its main base in the United States. What happens to the Catholics in the United States may be decisive for world Catholicism in the near future. We are not only solving one of our domestic problems when we help to influence the integration of the Catholic community into the democratic front, which is possible; we will be doing a job, the repercussions of which will be immediately felt in countries abroad.

We have had some deeper discussion in the course of this meeting than at any previous one of problems of the allies of the working class, the middle classes, particularly the farmers. I don't want to repeat what has been said here, except to emphasize again the importance of this question. Comrade Minor's speech was especially important. If we have learned anything from the last elections, surely we must have learned the profound necessity of the keenest sensitivity to what is going on among these allied strata of the population, to understand that there is where the sharpest struggle will take place between the democratic forces and fascism for the possession of the people. And if we defeat fascism there, we shall have defeated fascism nationally in our country.

* * *

We have had a very needed examination in many details of the struggle against Trotskyite-Lovestoneite wreckers and agents of fascism. This question is going to grow even sharper in the future. These forces are not only generated spontaneously with the process of the disintegration of the capitalist society; they are artificially cultivated in laboratories; they are a part of the poison gas and germ warfare of fascism against the people. And by the way, we should forget that old term of "renegade" that was used in the period when these people were being driven out of our Party. That was so long ago that it is ancient history. They are enemies not merely of our Party, but enemies of the people, enemies of the working class, criminal elements, degenerate tools of fascism; they belong with the stool-pigeons, provocateurs and other underworld characters. Let us brand that character upon them wherever they show themselves.

The struggle against Red-baiting has been disclosed in the discussion here as having been a universally growing characteristic of the election campaign and of the political life of the country generally. We must develop ever more skillfully our counter-action to the campaign of the Red-baiters, whose central instrument is the Dies Un-American Committee.

Insofar as we are dealing with people among whom we work and who know us, we have had very little difficulty in dispersing the attacks of the Dies Committee's Red-scare campaign; among much broader circles, it

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has been relatively easy to turn the effective weapon of public ridicule against its obvious and manifest absurdities; while among the thinking, conscious section of the population, our counter-attack against the Dies Committee has been effective.

But it would be the greatest mistake to underestimate the effect of this Red scare campaign, especially among the masses of the politically passive people, the stay-at-homes, the inactive ones, who get the impact mainly of the general charge of something seditious and un-American, dispersed very broadly over everything progressive; the only kind of answer that reaches them is that which just disclaims the charge that the New Deal is Communistic, but which leaves the assumption that if it were Communistic, it would be something terrible and un-American which would have to be stamped out in America.

There is not the slightest doubt that the agents of reaction expected us to be successful in countering the Dies Committee among the thinking section of the population; but the Dies Committee was staged, not for the benefit of the thinking section of the population, but for the stay-at-home, inactive section of the population; and among these, there is not the slightest doubt that it has registered against the New Deal, against the progressive forces, and against the Communist Party.

I think that we must give constantly increased attention to the question of reaching these broadest masses with the answer to the Dies Committee, and probably one of the best places for that will be the coming session of Congress, where we will find, in some way, the chance to make Congress *our* forum—not only Dies' forum, but ours—to reach the country on this question and to dramatize to the country the actual relation of our Party to the progressive forces in the country, to the nation, its interests, its history, traditions and institutions.

* * *

Unquestionably, we have approached in this plenum much closer than before to that very essential problem of the quality of our work. We have directed the attention of the whole Party to the study of the quality of the work of the branch. But I think it would be well for us also, in closing, to recall that basic task that we have assumed for every member of the Party—the task of the individual approach to improving the quality of the work, the necessity for everyone of us to be engaged constantly in self-study, perfecting our equipment, raising the quality of our work.

This is especially important for those of us who approach middle-age. As we begin to lose some of the boundless energies of youth, the only possible way we can continue to be useful and effective is to improve the quality of our work, to do less leg work and more head work.

"Head work" does not mean "headline work." The President coined what I am sure will become an immortal phrase when he spoke today of "headline mentality." Now, this headline mentality is, of course, cultivated by reaction in America; but its influence reaches even into our own ranks. How many of us have been influenced by the headlines of the newspapers? I am sure that it includes

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everybody. And I am sure that if we gained a certain relative freedom from the influence of the headlines, it is only by consciously building up our resistance. I am also sure that some of our comrades at critical moments have felt the influence of panic and pessimism thrown among them by the headlines of the newspapers.

If we are going to conduct a struggle against the headline mentality in the country, we have to be very strongly armed against the influence of this headline mentality in our own ranks. That means arming ourselves strongly in basic understanding, in mastering theory. The mastery of theory includes also the mastery of methods of work—methods of work that have become the hallmark of the seriously trained Communists throughout the world. Let us remind ourselves of a few of the features of this Bolshevik quality, methods of work.

One of the first of these is modesty. We still have around our Party traces of the old tendency of boasting. We must edit this out, strike it out, and eliminate every trace of boastfulness, especially in our approach to the masses. We must learn how we can develop the firmest ideological intransigeance, complete, uncompromising, sternest struggle on every question in which principle is involved, and combine this with greatest flexibility, the utmost sensitiveness to the peculiarities of the concrete application of our principle, and a sympathetic human approach to the people, to the persons who are involved. Some cannot be ideologically intransigeant without immediately engaging in war with anybody who does not accept our ideology.

But that is not what we mean by ideological intransigeance. We can defend our principles, without trying to force their acceptance by an unwilling person, especially when we remember that forceful methods in that connection are never successful. We have to convince. We have to be patient if we are going to convince, and will convince more quickly if we have a sympathetic, human contact. Inflexibility is the greatest enemy. Sectarianism and dogmatism are other names for it. Flexibility does not compromise principle, and that we certainly understand if we understand our principles deeply enough. That is why we talk about self-study so much, the deepening of our understanding of the principles upon which we are working.

A characteristic of Leninist work is this, that it is never overcome by a difficulty or a defeat. It is never baffled by an obstacle. It always knows how to find that point or that feature in a difficulty or obstacle or defeat which can be seized upon to turn it into its opposite. This is the very essence of our philosophy, and it has to be the sharpest point of our practice. Everything that we are doing is to change what is to something better—a transformation of a particular thing in a particular part of the world, as part of the big job of transforming the whole world. We cannot transform the whole world unless we recognize that in the world there are the forces existing for that transformation. The degree of maturity of a Communist leader is the degree to which he is able to take the initiative and the leadership in transforming an

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obstacle into an assistance, a difficulty into a help, a defeat into a victory.

Factors exist in the world outside of ourselves that enable us to do that, if we ourselves are mentally strong enough to find those factors and to seize them. That is why we are not dismayed or thrown into panic when the reactionaries gain victories in the elections. Right in the very victories of the reactionaries we find that factor that we can seize upon for their defeat; we examined the situation and we found they got their victory by unlimited use of demagogy. We will seize every promise they made to the masses and organize the masses against them on it, and they will either join the progressive camp or the masses will be torn away from them. The more demagogy they use the faster that will come about.

Comrade Anderson, in his excellent speech, may have been giving us the rules of the boxing ring, I don't know; but those rules apply just as much to politics. I think it would be a good idea to remember the formula he gave us. As I remember it, he said the victory goes to the one who hits first, hits oftenest, hits hardest, and hits last. I think if we combine that with another directive to think first, think fastest, think deepest, and think last, we have the perfect characteristic for disciples of Lenin and Stalin.

* * *

There are a few most important things we must discuss a little before I close—one is aid to Spain and China. I have a feeling we did not discuss this question enough in detail at this meeting. The tasks involved are the immediate tactical expression of our whole foreign policy, without which everything else becomes mere talk. These are the immediate pressing questions on which we must get immediate results.

Munich has so awakened America to the fact that fascism in Spain is a menace to American interests that even some conservative circles are taking up the demand to feed Spain. It is only a few months ago that only the progressives demanded that American food be sent to Spain. Now, even such people as Dorothy Thompson have joined. We should welcome that very much. It is proof of the political correctness of the slogan and we welcome such proof. It demonstrates that we can enlist the widest circles in America in demanding food for Spain. The Dorothy Thompsons and others, whose aid is very valuable, should be welcomed in the warmest terms.

We should remember, however, that the zeal of these recent recruits tends to lessen if *we* turn *our* attention to other things, thinking that now that there is such a broad movement we can leave the job for them to do. I wish we could; but experience has proved that we cannot. Such people have taken up these issues only when they are afraid the Communists will get too broad support if these issues are left only in our hands; and they will maintain their zeal to the degree that they have a little competition from us. We must keep that competition going; especially must we help to develop energetically the work of the North American Committee, the Medical Bureau, and the independent shipments of food to Spain. The one American Relief Ship that was sent, besides feeding many wo-

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men and children, had a most profound political effect throughout the world. But if that first ship is followed up with another and another, that is going to be the instrument that will start a whole series of American ships carrying food to Spain.

I must say a word of emphasis on the question of the veterans of the Lincoln Brigade, especially those who are coming back soon. Some eight or nine hundred are on their way. These boys who came from almost every state in the Union, who were the ambassadors of American democracy to the Spanish republic, are coming back enormously enriched in experience and having undergone some terrific trials. They are going to need our help to be fully reabsorbed into the daily life which has become so strange to them, having lived in a world of war, the most barbarous kind of war, most of them for the last two years. We must in an organized way, very patiently and systematically, help establish the guarantees everywhere, that each one in his own community, in his own state, is absorbed back into the everyday life of our people so that the great contributions they have to make to us will become possible. They are not coming back with these great contributions all tied up in a bundle in their pockets ready to pull out and show you; only in after years will you be able to measure the tremendous addition to our forces that these boys are going to be. Potentially they are a great force, but how much of that we realize depends upon how seriously we take this problem. I hope that everyone of us takes specially to heart the appeal of the Friends of the Lincoln Brigade and that we see that the Party is sensitive to this question everywhere, that it acts in a serious and responsible manner.

China becomes a great issue for all the American people in this coming year. America is waking up to the question of China. We are not doing enough to help this process, however. You know we in America have one of the finest magazines, published anywhere, about China. But this magazine, *China Today,* which receives universal praise among all who know anything about China and its importance, still has a shamefully small circulation. This shows that we are not giving sufficient attention to China. We must understand that China is one of the keys to winning the American people for our whole peace policy.

* * *

In the coming session of Congress, we are going to fight for the repeal or fundamental amendment of the Neutrality Law. This is the next big step in the establishment of a positive peace policy for America. There can be no fight for peace which is not resistance to fascist aggression. There can be no peace policy that does not discriminate between the fascist aggressor and the victims. There can be no positive peace policy which does not help the victims against aggression. And in the fight for the amendment to the Neutrality Law, let us be careful not to fall for the false issues of reaction which will always try to avoid a head-on struggle, to tangle up the issue in a lot of side issues.

The reactionaries raise a great cry that to vest discretion in the President to decide who is the aggressor

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and who is not is a step towards the creation of a fascist dictatorship in America. And they say in order to guard against fascism at home we must continue to help fascism abroad. We must expose the shameful falseness of this position.

It does not make any difference to us who puts the official finger on the aggressor, the thing we want to establish is that the finger must be put, and whether it is Congress or the President, we know they can put the finger only on one spot, because everyone knows who the aggressors are. We want an embargo against the aggressor governments, and we will support whatever measure promises most surely to attain this.

And that brings me to my final point. In the resolution you have adopted this evening, you will notice that it finished by summarizing the deliberations of this plenum with the slogan "For Social and National Security."

In that formulation are summarized the needs of the present moment, which involve the interests of the people of America, and which, consistently pursued, step by step, lead to the full program which we propose for the democratic front. There is special value in this particular combination of four words: Social and National Security. In the coming Congress the reactionaries will come forward as the champions of a national security to which social security must be sacrificed. And we are going to have all the muddleheads of the Norman Thomas type come forward and demand social security without national security. And from these two angles reaction is going to try to break up the unity of the people and come back to power, playing social security against national security and national security against social security.

We must make it clear to the people of America that, while we want social security for the entire people, its achievement is threatened by fascist aggression, which threatens to drag the whole world into war. Social security requires the security of the nation, and every honest American citizen, if he accepts the idea of *social and national security,* will inevitably, pursuing those things step by step, have to adopt a world view of peace, organizing all democratic forces of the Americas as a condition for security of the United States, the unity of the Americas with the oppressed peoples and the democratic forces of Europe, the leadership of America in organizing the world peace forces, the cooperation of America with the Soviet Union, for this purpose.

This is no dream. Within all circles of American society people are thinking along these lines. The upper bourgeoisie itself is divided on this question. Only part of them are ready to go along Chamberlain's path, and those who are not ready to go with Chamberlain already realize consciously that they must go with the Soviet Union. The people are facing this issue, and with this slogan, of social and national security, we can become ten-fold more effective in contributing to the organization of the democratic front in America, welding into a solid force the majority that will guarantee the victory for the people of America, victory for the democracies of the world, in the coming struggle.

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# LENIN—HIS MEANING FOR US TODAY

BY ROBERT MINOR

Fifteen years ago the man who embodied the most powerful mind and will that the world possessed died at the early age of 54, having more profoundly affected the course of civilization than has any other man that ever lived.

The life of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was cast in the time of the rise of imperialism, a time when all of the backward countries of the world that remained under the shadows of feudalism were being drawn into the orbit of modern capitalism, and into that imperialism which is the most parasitic and predatory stage of capitalism —and its last stage. The time had come when mankind was at last consciously to seize upon the blind forces of history to become finally master of its own fate; and Lenin was the genius who became history's best instrument for developing that consciousness and that action.

Lenin's life was an organic part of the life and struggles of the section of human society which alone has the capacity to act as the leading agency of all mankind in bringing it out of the chaos of imperialism and war, poverty and regimented ignorance, and to lead it up to the sunlit heights of an economically ordered life of universal wealth and freedom for development of all men and women. This leading section of society is the working class; and within this class its most conscious, self-sacrificing and self-disciplined members constitute the revolutionary *political party* of which Lenin became the modern founder, organizer and teacher. It is necessary to emphasize this, because Lenin could not have lived as he did and performed his world-shaking deeds—Lenin could not have been Lenin—separate and apart from the Party he created, the Communist Party. The work of Lenin and of Stalin is the continuation and the development to further heights of the work of Marx and Engels—in the new and terrific times of this century. "Leninism is Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and of proletarian revolution," said the greatest disciple who continues the leadership of Lenin.

"But if Leninism were only the application of Marxism to the particular situation in Russia it would be purely a national, and only a national, a purely Russian, and only a Russian, phenomenon."—(Stalin.)

And Lenin was not merely a Russian. To the best of England he was also an Englishman; to the true France he was a Frenchman, to the real Germany, a German—and we, well, we claim this great cosmopolitan



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leader to be inseparable from our own United States of America!

* * *

Nothing gives a clearer conception of Lenin's magnitude as world leader—the cosmopolitan character of his work—than the many observations he made over a long period of years on events in this country in which he saw represented the most advanced forms of capitalist economic development and the corresponding political institutions. It was inevitable and natural that he evinced keen interest in the United States over a long period of thirty-odd years. The huge and rapid development of the machine technique and mass production and its inevitable effects upon America and the world held Lenin's attention constantly, and his running comments on American factory methods during the years leading up to the World War are today startlingly informative. In 1913, he wrote:

"American capitalism stands ahead of all. The greatest development of technique, greatest rapidity of progress—all of this compels old Europe to follow in the wake of the Yankee." *

The application of the Taylor system in the years preceding the war was for Lenin a matter of great significance. Considered as a method applied *under the capitalist system,* he described the process of reducing the number of workers required for a given operation, and the catastrophic immediate results for the working class, "scientifically" squeezing several times as much work out of the worker, pitilessly wearing him down, etc. He showed in striking figures the effects in raising the productivity of labor, but with the throwing of workers out of industry by a capitalist use of this system. He wrote:

"What a success of productive labor!—but the pay of the worker is raised, not four times, but only one and a half times, at the most—and this only for a while. As soon as the worker becomes habituated to the new system his wages are reduced back to the old level. The capitalist receives an enormous profit, but the worker labors four times as intensively, wearing out his nerves and muscles four times faster." *

Without denying the progressive nature of such a system of organization of mass production in the ultimate sense, Lenin pointed out that the European capitalists "following in the wake of the Yankee" were adopting from America—

". . . not the democratic institutions, not the political freedom, not the republican structure of the state—but the latest examples of exploitation of the worker." **

Five years later it was my privilege to hear Lenin speak on the application of the Taylor system, not to exploitation of labor, but *to the industries of the socialist state;* to the building of a free socialist society. What a difference! In this application, it meant, not slavery, but emancipation; not the wearing out of men and women, but their winning of abundance and guaranteed leisure in a wealthy socialist society; not millions in a condition of unemployment and starvation, but the right to work

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* V. I. Lenin, Vol. XVI, p. 341. This and all the following citations from Lenin, except where otherwise stated, are translations from the Russian (Second Edition) of Lenin's *Collected Works.*

* Vol. XVII, pp. 247-48.
** Vol. XIX, p. 340.

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for all, under the Stalinist Constitution!

* * *

Lenin's particular interest in American agriculture began not later than 1905, and there could hardly be a better example of self-discipline than the fact that this intellectual giant—in the middle of the vortex of world war, while giving leadership to the immediate world struggle against war—was able so well to dispose of his time as to sit down and compose a profound study of the situation and development of far-away American farming and the conditions of life of the American farmer! But again, in the case of agriculture, this interest was inevitable because, as he wrote in 1914:

"An advanced country of the most modern capitalism offers particular interest for a study of the social structure of modern agriculture and its evolution. The United States has no rival that can equal it in the rapidity of development of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, nor in the peak of development it has already attained, nor in the vastness of the area to which it applies a technique of equipment in accord with the last word of science—adapted to the remarkable variety of natural and historical conditions—nor in the political freedom and cultural level of the masses of the population. This country is in many respects the model and ideal of our bourgeois civilization." *

But Lenin, as always, saw the political connotations:

"He who controls the banks, *directly* controls one-third of the American farms and indirectly dominates all of them. The organization of production in accordance with one general plan on a million farms supplying over one-half the total agricultural output is something that is undoubtedly realizable in view of the present stage of development of associations of every kind and of the high level of development of transportation and communication." *

He used the American example to smash the arguments of Russian opportunists who thought large-scale and corporation farming were "decaying" in America, and that the free land of America could lead to something other than capitalism.

* * *

In closest connection with this interest in the purely technical marvels of development of American society was Lenin's fascination with the problems of political development of the working class under these most advanced American conditions. He penetrated deeply into the writings of Marx and Engels on the earliest aspects of this subject, of which he wrote:

"In Anglo-American Socialism Marx and Engels most sharply criticized its isolation from the masses. The red thread running through all of the manifold references to the Social-Democratic Federation in England and to the American Socialists amounts to the accusation that they distorted Marxism into a dogma, into a 'petrified orthodoxy,' that they saw in it a 'symbol of faith and not a guide to action'; that they were unable to adapt themselves to the labor movement, theoretically helpless but vital, massive and powerful, in motion around them." **

And:

"In such countries where there is *no* Social-Democratic workers' party, *no* Social-Democratic deputies in parliament, *no* sort of systematic, steadfast Social-Democratic politics either in elections or in the press, etc.—in such countries Marx and Engels

* Vol. XVII, p. 575.

* *Ibid.*, p. 643.
** Vol. XI, p. 166.

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taught the Socialists *at all costs* to break the narrow sectarianism and to connect themselves with the labor movement, in order *politically to arouse* the proletariat. For, in the last third of the nineteenth century, in England and America, the proletariat had manifested *almost no* political independence. The political arena in these countries—with an almost absolute absence of bourgeois-democratic historical tasks—was entirely overrun by the triumphant, smug bourgeoisie which, in the art of deceiving, debasing and bribing the workers, has no equal in the world." *

He constantly searched the reports of all events in America, looking for every evidence of the inevitable ripening of an American revolutionary class-consciousness. The winning of a vote of 800,000 by Debs in the election of 1912 delighted him, and he hoped then for a steady growth at last of a revolutionary Socialist movement of mass proportions. His study of the "Bull Moose" movement of Theodore Roosevelt in this connection is enlightening today.** Against the opportunism of the Socialists, carried over with modern variants, from the time of Marx's and Engels' criticisms, he was sharp. In the Socialist Labor Party, he saw a deadly sectarianism; but for years he hoped for some change in this respect, commenting upon its program as having "elements" of revolutionary character.

* * *

Lenin gave careful study to that extremely important characteristic of the United States, that it "stands at the head of countries importing workers," making use both of the U. S. Census reports of 1900 and 1910, and of the book on immigration by the late Dr. Isaac Hourwich. Lenin wrote some of the most interesting studies of this question, taking it first from the point of view of the "importation" of laborers by this American Leviathan of capitalism for the purpose of more successful competition with its European rivals—and, secondly, from the point of view (conversely) of the *"progressiveness"* of this phenomenon of modern mass migration of peoples.

"American capitalism tears loose millions of workers of backward Eastern Europe . . . from conditions almost of the Middle Ages, and puts them into the ranks of the advanced international army of the proletariat." *

However, noting in the years 1917-18 the fact that the Socialist trend in the United States was found mainly among these immigrant workers, Lenin centered an avid interest on the problem of when the *native* mass of American workers would manifest such developments. I recall an instance in 1921 when I introduced him to an American comrade and he eagerly inquired whether the comrade was a "native American," where his father and mother were born, etc. Nevertheless, he took close account of the fact that the immigrant workers of America constitute a huge mass of the working class *in the basic industries,* and attributed to the various national groups a corresponding importance, as I had occasion to learn from conversations with him. About America, the land that stood first in "importing labor," he wrote in 1913:

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* *Ibid.,* p. 174.

** See: V. I. Lenin, "The Presidential Elections in the United States," translated in *The Communist,* January, 1928.

* Vol. XVII, p. 41.

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"The bourgeoisie incites the workers of one nation against the workers of another, trying to divide them. The conscious workers, understanding the inevitability and progressiveness of the breaking down of all national partitions set up by capitalism, try to aid the enlightenment and organization of their comrades from backward countries." *

* * *

Lenin followed with close attention every event that related to the American Negroes. In 1913, he made a comparison between the American Negro, who had reduced his illiteracy to 44½ per cent, and the Russian peasant, who was still illiterate to the extent of 73 per cent. This was done from the point of view of a search for the traces of slavery and serfdom remaining in America and in Russia, respectively, and Lenin laid the relative advance of the Negro to the fact that the American emancipation had been accomplished by means "less reformist" than that of the Russian peasants. However, he pointed out that the illiteracy of *white* persons in the former slave territory was 11 to 12 per cent, as compared to 4 and 6 per cent of illiteracy in other territory, and wound up with the words:

"The traces of slavery weigh not only upon the Negro. Shame to America for the condition of the Negroes!" **

His concern with the American Negro is shown in extensive examination of the Negro sharecropper, and again in polemizing against the opportunists who advocated "cultural-national autonomy" for oppressed peoples within imperialist states. Lenin called sharply to attention the fact that the American Negroes in the South are given *separate or "racial" schools* (one of the "demands" of the "cultural autonomists" in Russia), and that all of the worst brutalities continued, such as a 44 per cent illiteracy among Negroes. He finished with biting sarcasm:

"In the South there are separate schools—'national' or race schools, if you like—for Negroes. It seems that this is the only example of 'nationalization' of the school in reality." *

He followed in the most detailed way the cultural reflections of the huge machine development of American society. For instance, the report of the New York Public Library for 1911, after the institution had been removed to the new building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street, gave Lenin the basis for a fierce attack on the tsarist monarchy's obscurantist policy of restricting the use of the Russian libraries, and for a ringing demand that the libraries be made accessible "to the masses, to the crowd, to the street." Lenin wrote enthusiastically about even the smallest detail of the New York library's attractions:

"The total number of volumes is now approximately 2,000,000. It happened that the first request for a book from a visitor in the reading room was in the Russian language. This was for a work of N. Groth, *The Moral Ideals of Our Times.* The application slip for the book was given in at 9:08 A.M. The book was delivered to the reader at 9:15 A.M." **

He revelled in delight with the example of efficiency. Then follows a thorough and enthusiastic description of the number of books given out on

* *Ibid.*, p. 42.
** Vol. XVI, p. 299.

* Vol. XVII, p. 147.
** Vol. XVI, pp. 529-30.

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cards and used by visiting readers, and 20,000 volumes on open shelves; the branch libraries in Manhattan, the Bronx and Richmond, "42 branches and soon they will have 43," with the aim that no resident will be further than "three-quarters of a verst" from a branch library, he exclaimed. Of course, Lenin made use of the New York library to attack savagely the "dark" regime of the tsar; "That is the order of things existing in New York. But with us?"

### LENIN ON TODAY'S MOST URGENT PROBLEMS

However, if we learn anything from Lenin, it must be, first of all, the lesson of *concrete* application of our principles to the exact situation and problems that are decisive *here and now.*

We, the Communist Party of the United States, have just held a Plenum of our National Committee. We formed important judgments and passed momentous decisions, the summing up of which brought the Party the slogan: *"Social and National Security."*

What, directly and immediately, are the lessons of Leninism in respect to the two aspects (*inseparable* aspects) of our present central slogan?

### SOCIAL SECURITY

Lenin was the best master in the field of struggle for social security. He studied both the Russian and the American aspects of workers' insurance many years before this question had received any special attention here. Under his leadership, the most brilliant fight was carried on in the old tsarist Russia upon this key question, and masses mobilized against the autocracy. His short, concise, sharp-cutting statement of the essence of this question, written in the resolution of the 1912 Conference of the Party, gives the gist of the problem:

"The best form of workers' insurance is government insurance, arranged on the following basis:

"a. It should secure the workers in *all* cases of loss by them of their working capacity (mutilation, illness, age, invalidism; for women, besides that, pregnancy and childbirth; compensation for widows and orphans after death of the breadwinner), or, in case of loss of wages through unemployment;

"b. Insurance should include *all* persons of wage labor and their families;

"c. All insured persons should be compensated on the principle of replacing the *entire* wages, whilst *all* expenses of insurance should fall upon the employer and the government.

"d. All aspects of the insurance should be controlled by a single insurance organization, built on the territorial type and on the foundation of *full* self-government of the insured." *

I think this remains the most valid statement of the essential principles of social insurance, fresh and vital as a general guiding line today everywhere under modern industry—*provided* we carry out *also* the Leninist principle of considering and allowing for the *exact concrete conditions of the time and place;* and, he warned, of course, if this is not done, the result is anything but Leninism.

But for Americans it is well to remark here that a close bearing upon all matters of social security is to be found in Lenin's study of the results

* Vol. XV, p. 385.

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of the United States federal income tax following the Sixteenth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution, on the basis of which amendment, largely, the system of federal relief and government responsibility for economic need of the population became legally possible. Lenin helps us to discover America. And when he shows what wealth for all is already now within reach through the full application of the splendid technical equipment that we already possess, he opens up a vista that should be seen by every American in these times.

### NATIONAL SECURITY

But what can we learn from Lenin that will help us understand the other aspect of our present main slogan, indivisible from it—National Security?

Comrade Browder, in his recent report to the Plenum of the National Committee of the Communist Party, presented in succinct terms the situation confronting our country in this hour:

"Against the background of Munich our people now begin to understand the new Japanese aggressions, and the insolent Japanese demand that the United States accept its closed door in the Far East. Chamberlain's boasted 'peace pact' with Hitler is seen in its true light as the removal of the British fleet as an obstacle to Hitler's plans for conquest of Latin America. The Munich Pact, unloosing the floodgates of reaction over Europe, strengthening Japanese aggression in China, threatening Latin America with large-scale fascist penetration, moving through the Empire ties to bring Canada into its orbit, clearly envisages the encirclement of the United States by the new coalition of the fascist powers with the imperialist ruling circles of Britain and France...."

Thus is raised sharply the question of resisting fascist aggression as the way of struggle for peace, the question of the national security of the United States.

"Projects for a new 'Munich' settlement for Spain now being hatched in Paris by Chamberlain and Halifax, in conjunction with Daladier and Bonnet, according to the dictates of Hitler and Mussolini, thus strike clearly against Latin America in the first place; they constitute a dagger at the heart of American security against the fascist madness flooding Europe, Africa and Asia." *

We are in a period of war. Open war in Europe and Asia.

"The second imperialist war, a robber war for a new repartition of the world, has in fact already begun. It is already raging in various corners of the globe. In Spain and China the fascist butchers are doing their abominable work. More than 500,000,000 human beings have been hurled into the abyss of bloody destruction. War threatens to spread to new territories and to involve new peoples. Hundreds of millions of people are menaced with attack by the fascist beasts of prey." ("The 21st Anniversary of the great October Socialist Revolution."—Manifesto of the Communist International, November 7, 1938.)**

Lenin was, foremost of all men who ever lived, the leader of the struggle against war. We, the Communists, more now than at any time, need to understand and to be able to follow his teachings in the struggle against war.

There are people today who bend every energy to distort, belie and reverse those teachings with easy vulgarities in the interests of the war-makers themselves, the fascist hangmen of the peoples.

There is a huge and bloody war in China. Is there an honest non-fascist

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* *Social and National Security*, by Earl Browder, Workers Library Publishers, pp. 3-4.

** *The Communist*, December, 1938.

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in the whole world who cannot see that peace can be saved only with a wholehearted partisan struggle for the Chinese republic? Is there a single honest democrat who will deny that China's cause is a just national war of liberation, and that all honest men have a duty to become partisans in the cause of China? Is there anyone who doubts that Communists, the workers (and all honest democrats) must be partisans in this war? Or does anyone believe that peace can be won for the world in any way that does not include the driving of the Japanese armies out of China?

But the Trotskyite scum, as the Nazi press, the Mussolini and Japanese militarist press, oppose this view. For the war is one with China on one side and the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis on the other!

In the present reawakening of the magnificent struggle of the Ethiopian people against Mussolini's butchers—is there anyone claiming adherence to labor and progress who does not strive to do all in his capacity in support of Ethiopia's struggle, without the winning of which there can be and will be no peace? But the fascist sewage of all the world says otherwise, including Mr. Trotsky who is in liaison with Rudolph Hess and Hearst, and must adhere to the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis. But no honest man.

Can anyone deny that the war on the side of the Spanish republic is a war of national liberation, that the driving out of the fascist invader is the prerequisite for peace—and that Communists and all men worthy of the name of democrat *must* be partisans of the Spanish republic?

Only Hitler and Mussolini—and their accomplice Trotsky—oppose this. In all the world there is no person claiming to be of the labor movement so low as to oppose the defense of the Spanish republic in its national war, except the "Chowderhead" scum of the espionage agents organized by Trotsky and Rudolph Hess; we must add the school of provocateurs and fascist military "observers" of the type of Sam Barron of the Dies Committee.

What, then, was the position of Lenin on the aspects of war that are before us *today* after the crime of Munich and in the face of the fascist drive toward bloody subjection of the peoples of the world? Can Leninism help us now to see clearly our problem of today? Yes, Leninism is the only road to peace today.

Lenin said in August, 1915:

"The Socialists have always condemned wars between peoples as barbarous and bestial. Our attitude toward war, however, differs in principle from that of the bourgeois pacifists and anarchists. We differ from the first in that we understand the inseparable connection between wars on the one hand and class struggle inside the country on the other, we understand the impossibility of eliminating wars without eliminating classes and creating Socialism, and in that we recognize the justice, the progressivism and the necessity of civil war, *i.e.*, wars of an oppressed class against the oppressor, of slaves against the slave-holders, of serfs against the landowners, of wage workers against the bourgeoisie. We Marxists differ both from the pacifists and the anarchists in that we recognize the necessity of an historical study of each war individually, from the point of view of Marx's dialectical materialism." *

On this basis Communists have

* Lenin, *Imperialist War*, p. 219, International Publishers, New York.

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never been passive, but always active participants in *all* events of history in their time. In the Wars of 1848 throughout Europe, the early Communists, led by Marx and Engels, were everywhere partisans on that side which expressed the progressive cause, toward the overthrow of absolutism, toward the liberation of peoples from national oppression.

The American Civil War of 1861 was the occasion for the first big action of international solidarity of the Communist organizations of the world, an example which has its latest fulfillment in the heroic international volunteers and other actions for Spain. Marx and Engels, the founders of the First International, declared that "from the commencement of the titanic American strife the working men of Europe felt instinctively that the Star-Spangled Banner carried the destiny of their class," * and in support of Lincoln's government the Communists carried through that first great international action of proletarian solidarity in defense of democracy—the recruiting of volunteers in Germany, England and Ireland to come to the defense of the American republic against the pro-slavery insurrection of the Southern rebel generals. Communists leaders such as Joseph Weydemeyer received commissions as officers from President Lincoln. Were Marx and Engels right—or was there some other "road to peace" than the suppression of the pro-slavery insurrection? History has proved them right. What logic and glorious tradition were followed by the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in Spain which, in holding back the fascist war-makers, has done more for peace than any others!

Nowhere is there any record of successful defense of peace through an attitude of "appeasement" toward war-makers.

In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, the Communist movement again took sides, under the leadership of Marx and Engels, because, as Lenin expressed it:

> "The war of 1870-71 was historically progressive on Germany's side up to the defeat of Napoleon III, because both he and the tsar had long oppressed Germany, keeping it in a state of feudal decentralization." *

It is clear that in the World War of 1914 Lenin followed the line of revolutionary socialism charted by Marx and Engels *on the basis again of a concrete study of that particular war.* It was a predatory—an imperialist war on *both* sides; *this* was the decisive thing. For this reason Lenin and his Party declared:

> "Turning the present imperialist war into civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan. It is indicated by the experiences of the Commune, it was outlined by the Basle resolution (1912) and it follows from all the conditions of an imperialist war among highly developed bourgeois countries. However difficult such transformation may appear at one time or another, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, insistent, unflinching preparatory work in this direction once war has become a fact." **

"Socialist" opportunists and centrists, of whom Trotsky was the example of the most dishonest, became

* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Address of the International Workingmen's Association to Abraham Lincoln," *The Civil War in the United States*, p. 279, International Publishers, New York.

* Lenin, *Imperialist War*, p. 228.
** *Ibid.*, p. 82.

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in 1914 the destroyers of the International and the most effective assistants to the imperialist butchers. In Lenin's opinion, among the worst of these was Trotsky, who rejected and fought savagely against the revolutionary Bolshevik slogan of "Defeat one's own government."

Trotsky aided the Russian tsarist government by trying to win the Socialists away from the revolutionary defeatist program of Lenin, by means of the demagogic catchword, *"Neither victory nor defeat."*

This rotten, deceitful slogan expressed, according to Lenin, the chauvinism that was at the bottom of Trotsky's outlook. Said Lenin:

> "The Organization Committee, as well as Bukvayed and Trotsky, put themselves entirely on the same ground with David [the German Social-Democratic supporter of the Kaiser] when they defend the slogan 'Neither victory nor defeat.'"

And again:

> "The advocates of victory for 'one's own' government in the present war, as well as the advocates of the slogan 'Neither victory nor defeat,' proceed equally from the standpoint of social chauvinism." *

The correctness of the policy of Lenin is proved by the existence and role of the great socialist state, towering as the stronghold of peace in the surrounding chaos of Europe and Asia.

We are applying the principles of Leninism when we teach the masses, as Lenin did, to examine *concretely* the war situation *as it is today*—in the condition of the fascist offensive against world peace and democracy—and when, on the basis of such concrete examination, we issue the slogan "For Social and National Security."

Without that concrete Leninist examination, blundering blindly on the basis of a preconceived pattern of the past war, many sincere haters of war can be victimized with the claim that peace can be had by "appeasement" of the fascist war-makers—by conceding South America to the conquest of Hitler, as Hoover proposed; by a policy of "isolation" that is only a cover for acquiescence in the conquest of the world by fascism; and by a policy of "neutrality" which in reality makes our country an auxiliary of the fascist dictatorships, who receive from us their war materials while commanding us to boycott each democratic nation in turn that they wish to invade and destroy. Without that Leninist examination, sincere workers can be deceived by hideous distortions of "revolutionary" phrases, to take a position that only helps the friends of "Generalissimo" Franco, Wilhelm Hermann Goering, General Balbo, and Neville Chamberlain in respect to the "neutrality" of bourgeois-democratic nations toward Spain, China, Ethiopia!

We will examine the matter in the light of the words and deeds of Lenin himself.

*(To be continued in the February issue.)*

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* *Ibid.*, p. 234.

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# LENIN AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY HERITAGE

BY RUDY BAKER

DURING the most critical days of the great Russian Revolution, in August, 1918, when the young socialist republic was fighting for its existence against the White Guard troops of the tsarist generals and the armies of foreign intervention (among them American troops), Lenin wrote his famous *Letter to American Workers.** In this letter, the greatest Marxist of our time explained the significance and the tasks of the first socialist victory, appealed for political aid from the American proletariat; and took the occasion to point out, for the first time, the existence of the deep-rooted revolutionary traditions of the American people. In this remarkable document Lenin opened the broad vista of American history for Marxist study and evaluation, declaring:

> "The American *people* has a revolutionary tradition adopted by the best representatives of the American proletariat. . . . This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the eighteenth century and the Civil War in the nineteenth century." (Emphasis mine—R.B.)

This profound observation did not bear immediate fruit. The rising Left Socialist movement was still too deeply affected by the ideologies of economism and syndicalism. In this formative period the revolutionary forerunners of the present day Communist Party sought their inspiration and revolutionary lessons almost solely in the histories and experiences of European revolutions. Revolutionary Marxism had as yet developed no firm native roots.

Lenin toiled and fought for revolutionary Marxism and for the proletarian revolution for two decades before the American working class learned of his existence and his mighty work. The opportunist leaders of the Second International, whose revisionist line had paralyzed the Socialist movement in America as elsewhere (except in Russia, where Lenin defeated them in his epic struggle against Menshevism and its centrist brand), pursued a deliberate conspiracy of silence against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. While the opportunists polluted the well springs of revolutionary Marxism and quarantined the profound contributions of Lenin, the revolutionary Socialist forces in America were turning to syndicalist ideologies and purely trade union activities in instinctive, violent protest against the shameful reformism of the Socialist Party. The predominantly healthy

* V. I. Lenin, *Letter to American Workers.* International Publishers, New York.



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membership of this party, deprived of their best leaders (among them Foster and Haywood) were, by the expulsions of 1908 and 1912, for the moment unguided and helpless against the ruthless, opportunist officialdom backed by the Second International.

The reformist character of the Socialist Party leadership is partly reflected in the fact that this party of one hundred thousand members did not publish any original Marxist studies and possessed no theoretical organ. Theoretical poverty was consistently encouraged in order to facilitate the propagation of their reformist class-collaboration brand of socialism. Marxist classics were published in the United States, on a semi-cooperative basis through the Chas. H. Kerr publishing house, but often faultily edited, and with distorting prefaces. With the emergence of the early Left-wing, the monthly magazine, the *International Socialist Review* was issued. This fine militant periodical was, however, marred by prevalent sectarian and syndicalist tendencies and the absence of clear Marxist theory. The small, withered Socialist Labor Party of that period, claiming the monopoly of Marxism in America, also issued some Marxist literature, but its extreme sectarianism and abstractness either repelled or atrophied all those within its reach.

It can be said that virtually all Left elements disdained or ignored American traditions and history. Marx's and Engels' writings on the Civil War and their important correspondence with their followers in the United States on American problems were not translated into the English language. Bourgeois historians and July Fourth orators were given the monopoly of the revolutionary traditions of the nation. Their interpretation of history and claim to all revolutionary traditions went unchallenged. Disdain and contempt marked the more extreme sectarian comments on history in those days. Perhaps the worst distortions were to be found in the circles which considered George Washington solely as a landowner and slaveholder, Jefferson a petty-bourgeois statesman, and Lincoln the representative of the bankers and capitalists who freed the slaves as a military measure to defeat a temporarily dissident section of American exploiters.

Tom Paine and John Brown were the only figures in American revolutionary history who received occasional honorable mention. And this, not because their profound revolutionary role was understood or appreciated, but rather because Paine wrote against the church and Brown resorted to "direct action." This vulgar, non-Marxist estimate of history and all-too-light surrender of the revolutionary traditions of the American people, in varying degrees, was to be found in all the Left currents in the labor movement before the World War. While the Left-wing forces could point with just pride to really historic militant strike struggles and great progressive battles against the corrupt trade union bureaucracy, the sphere of revolutionary theory was largely colored by petty-bourgeois romanticism; history—in the light of historical materialism—was virtually a closed book, and politics was surrendered to the social reformists. The

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Left-wing forces were divided, and pursued vague and diverse paths to revolution and socialism.

The great October Revolution electrified and reorientated the Left-wing forces of this country. Lenin, symbolizing revolutionary Marxism, loomed victorious and powerful above the shattered conspiracy of silence, sabotage, and slander. Lenin's victory revealed his program, his Party and his profound mastery and elaboration of Marxist theories, thus providing a common aim and program for the revolutionary forces in the Socialist Party, in the I.W.W., and in the A. F. of L. unions. Within two years the Communist Party of America was founded.

The *Letter to American Workers* revealed Lenin as a profound student of American history and the labor movement. In this historic document Lenin gave us the first Marxist evaluation of our 1776 War for Independence when he wrote:

> "The history of modern civilized America opens with one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few among the large number of wars of conquest. . . . It was a war of the American *people* against English robbers who subjected America and held it in colonial slavery as these 'civilized' bloodsuckers are even now subjecting and holding in colonial slavery hundreds of millions of people in India, Egypt, and in all corners of the world." (Emphasis mine--R.B.)

Lenin also gave us a Marxist evaluation of the Civil War in a few clear significant words when he speaks of:

> ". . . the greatest, world-historic, progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861-65."

In these concise references to the American revolutionary events, Lenin wrote of *peoples'* revolutionary struggles for liberation and democracy. Lenin thus taught us that the *people* are the creators and inheritors of the great bourgeois-democratic revolutionary traditions and that they will fight unceasingly to defend and extend further the great historic principles of democracy, liberty and progress. Lenin taught us to have faith in the American people as a historically progressive and revolutionary force.

Lenin had restored the great revolutionary traditions of all the early struggles against the Russian feudalism and tsarism and taught the workers, peasants and oppressed peoples of the Russian empire how to utilize these brilliant traditions in the revolution against tsarism and capitalism.

The February and October Revolutions of 1917 were the fruits of the successful efforts to fuse the national revolutionary traditions of the peoples of Russia with the revolutionary Marxist program of the Bolsheviks. Lenin had also taught the French workers to restore and claim the traditions of the great French revolution and the Paris commune and to use them as a basis for mobilizing the people in the revolutionary struggle for socialism. He also taught the revolutionary proletariat of the twentieth century to cherish the heritage of eighteenth century French materialism. In all this, Lenin manifested profoundly the international role of Bolshevism.

* * *

The American Communists were slow to learn the full significance of Lenin's teaching on revolutionary

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traditions. The newly-formed Communist Party passed through several years of illegality and persecution; it had the difficult task of overcoming the sectarian and opportunist heritages of the Socialist Party, of syndicalist ideologies and economist conceptions which were brought along into the young party from the diverse Left labor currents. At the same time, it was confronted with numerous complicated practical tasks and activities. The entire difficult process of mastering Marxist-Leninist theory and practice was further retarded by internal factional struggles which only ended when, with the aid of the Communist International, the Party's ranks were cleansed of Trotskyite and Lovestoneite disrupters.

It is only in recent years that our Party has advanced on the road of mastering Bolshevism. The powerful and profound writings of Comrade Stalin on scientific, Bolshevik integrity in the writing of history have constituted a source of inspiration to our Party. Comrade Dimitroff's signal warning against national nihilism has further encouraged our Party to probe deeper into the historic life currents of the American nation. With the theoretical and political maturing of the Party, serious attention has increasingly been directed to the study of history. In the last few years considerable progress has been made in this field. Comrade Browder stands out as the first and foremost to have equipped our Party and the general people's democratic movement with the rich traditions of the noble past struggles of the American people.

Comrade Browder has followed the lead that Lenin indicated in the *Letter to American Workers* and that Comrade Stalin and Comrade Dimitroff have set us. Comrade Foster has made further profound contributions by tracing the rich traditions of the labor movement on the general background of the American people's struggle for democracy. The history, the character and the work of our Party are today inseparably linked up with the history and life of the people of America. Comrade Browder ably presents this truth:

> "Today, the Communist Party has drawn to itself everything vital in the revolutionary traditions of our land, it is bone and flesh of the American workers, farmers and intellectuals, it embodies the great American tradition of the melting pot which fuses the best from all the world, it realizes the great slogan of Tom Paine who said: 'The world is my country, to do good is my religion.' Our Party has been able to become so thoroughly American precisely because it has nurtured itself upon the teachings of the greatest thinkers of the world, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin." *

Comrade Browder has in this as in other spheres blazed the trail indicated to the American workers by Lenin in 1918. Following his leadership and brilliant Marxist contributions, scores of comrades have begun unfolding the vast lessons and riches that lie in the relatively short but stormy history of the American people.

* * *

The work accomplished so far has but opened the gateway that leads to the mighty tasks of re-examining and revaluing the history of the American

* Earl Browder, *The People's Front*, p. 244, International Publishers, New York.

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people from the scientific standpoint of Marxism-Leninism.

It is, however, essential that our movement fully master the material and the lessons placed at our disposal by Comrade Browder and our writers on history. American revolutionary traditions provide us with an invincible weapon in the struggle against tory reaction in our country. In this sphere as elsewhere it is a race against time. One essential characteristic of fascism and reaction in the United States is their resort to "democratic" demagogy and distortion of the revolutionary traditions of the people.

It is no accident that the tories of America conceal their vile program under the name of "Liberty' League. They know full well the inherent attachment of the American people to democracy and progress. As Comrade Browder repeatedly pointed out, they are resorting to flank attacks upon the democracy of the people. They are experts at cunning and deception, and strive to pose as the champions of democratic traditions and the hard-won democratic rights of the people. We must learn to expose their demagogic championship of democracy and liberty as an insidious tactic to destroy democracy. Their championing of liberty has nothing in common with the cause of liberty and democratic rights of the American people. They strive for the liberty of monopolies and trusts to crush the living conditions and the rights of the masses. Their demagogic slogan for the right to work is a scheme to destroy the trade unions and the workers' right to strike. Their cry for liberty conceals their desire to destroy the democratic institutions of the country.

The democratic and revolutionary traditions of our history are deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of the people. We must understand the tremendous social force of these traditions. We must learn their historic sources and master the art of vitalizing these traditions among the people in order to combat more effectively the modern tories. Our struggle for the preservation and extension of democracy and our struggle for socialism are the continuation of the American people's historic struggle for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

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"The struggle within Congress for the enactment of a really progressive program will be fruitful to the extent, and little further, that the whole country is mobilized to watch and advise Congress, with the people of each district speaking directly to their own Congressman. There will be plenty of reactionary pressure groups working upon the Congressmen, and this pressure of special interests can only be, and must be, *offset by mass pressure from the people.* We must be ready to cooperate most energetically in every effort in that direction."—Earl Browder, *Social and National Security,* p. 23.

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# ISOLATIONIST DEFEATISM!

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

COMMUNISTS throughout the world, ever since the fascist governments launched their campaigns of treaty-breaking and war-making, have insisted that these marauders could be stopped only by a solid and determined united front of the democratic, peace-loving peoples of the world. The necessity of this policy has been repeatedly dramatized by the retreats of the governments of the bourgeois-democratic countries before the fascist offensive, with the consequent invasions of China, Ethiopia, Spain, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and the gradual development of a spreading second world war, which already has engulfed one-fourth of the world's population.

The sell-out at Munich by Chamberlain and Daladier emphasizes afresh the need of concerted peace action by the democratic peoples. Munich has greatly strengthened the fascist offensive and built up a threat to peace and democracy all over the world. It makes it more urgent than ever that the peace-loving peoples of the world develop a resolute stand against the fascist barbarians. Dimitroff, in his article upon the occasion of the twenty-first anniversary of the Russian Revolution, put the issue squarely:

"The defense of world peace, the defense of the peoples against armed fascist aggression, cannot be achieved by wordy pacifist declarations and invocations. What is needed is active struggle, determined resistance. The onslaught of armed fascism must be answered by the mailed fist of the peoples." *

The truth of this statement would seem to be self-evident. But not to American isolationists. Whether reactionaries—Hoover, Hearst and Coughlin—or "progressives"—Beard, Dewey and Thomas—they oppose in principle any organized international resistance to the fascist war-makers. Their common policy is to break up all mass resistance to the fascist dictatorships. Their isolationism, when it is not active support of fascism, as in the case of the reactionaries, is surrender to it, as in the case of the "progressives." Indeed, many "progressive" isolationists are obviously preparing to accept the victory of world fascism as inevitable and are adapting themselves to this perspective. This is the central idea in Norman Thomas' new book, *Socialism on the Defensive,* and in a recent issue of the *Nation* Oswald G. Villard assures us that he will surrender to fascism *only* after he has made "every moral protest."

* See *The Communist International,* p 977. No. 11. Workers Library Publishers, New York.



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### WOULD CONCERTED PEACE ACTION LEAD TO WAR?

The isolationists of all stripes seek to prevent the people from taking a determined stand against fascism and in defense of peace by asserting that this would surely provoke the fascist dictators into war. Moreover, they add, for us it would also be a lost war, because of an alleged superior strength of the fascist powers.

Such argumentation goes directly contrary to the facts of the world situation in which we live. With regard to the first contention that concerted action by the democratic peoples to preserve peace would provoke war, just the opposite is the case. It is precisely because the democracies have *not* made a common stand that the fascist dictators have been able to carry through their murderous war plans. Only when such a united peace stand is achieved can the fascist aggressions be halted. The policy of isolationism is the surest way to prepare the way for fascism and to deluge the world with blood.

With regard to the second contention of the isolationists, that international concerted peace action would not only lead to war, but to a lost war—this too is without foundation or reality. It is significant that every fascist or near-fascist is singing the same song of the military helplessness of the democracies. It was with such arguments that Chamberlain and Daladier put across their infamous Munich sell-out; by their grossly exaggerating the strength of Germany and minimizing that of the democratic countries. The argumentation of the "progressive" American isolationists fits right into this defeatist policy. Thus, says Villard in the *Nation:*

> "Germany came near enough to winning the World War with a military machine which, I believe, was inferior to that of Hitler. Certainly, it was not backed by such adoration as the youth of Germany have for the Nazi government. Who knows what tactics, what devilish skill, what new weapons, what superior generals this new Germany may not produce?"

Contrary to this pro-fascist surrenderism, the democratic countries are overwhelmingly superior to the fascist powers in military potentialities. The capitalist democracies and the Soviet Union possess together a vastly greater strength in morale, men, money, industry, materials and strategic position. This remains true despite the great strengthening of Hitler's resources by the Munich pact. If the democratic peoples will but stand resolutely together they can stop the fascists by confronting them with the certainty of ruinous defeat if they dare to provoke war. The Communist International puts the question correctly in its recent manifesto:

> "A defense cordon of armed peoples who have joined their forces with the great Soviet people will doom fascism to impotence and its inevitable ruin."

The superior strength of the democracies militarily was demonstrated dramatically in the Czechoslovakian crisis. When the peoples of the democratic countries, outraged by repeated fascist aggressions, showed a determination to rally to the defense of Czechoslovakia, this at once put Hitler in a dangerous crisis. With the French, British and Soviet peoples lining up against him, and with the United

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States tending in the same direction, Hitler was confronted with overwhelmingly superior military forces. His European allies, Poland, Italy and Hungary, realizing this situation, displayed every indication that if it came to war they would not join Hitler. In this crisis Chamberlain, in mortal fear of a fascist defeat which would cause a great international democratic upsurge that might upset British Toryism, rushed to save Hitler by splitting up Czechoslovakia and by giving him a free hand in Eastern Europe.

Contrary to the surrender isolationists, should the democratic peoples of the world be forced into war by fascist aggression, military defeat is not one of the terrors they must contemplate.

### IS DEMOCRACY DEFENDABLE?

The theories of the isolationists that international concerted peace action would lead to war, and a lost war at that, are so unconvincing even to themselves that they have to push to its defense with further surrender arguments. In one chorus of reactionaries and "progressives," they argue that in the event of a fascist-provoked war, whether the democratic powers are finally victorious or not, democracy in any case would be annihilated and fascism would inevitably emerge the winner. Villard states this argument of both the Right and "Left" isolationists thus:

". . . for it is of the very essence of war that the evils you seek to destroy by it are not destroyed but enter into your own life. . . . The right always wins! But not on the battlefield."

This surrender conception has nothing in common with the historical experience of the American or any other democratic people. It was not by such non-resistance that the masses through the centuries defeated their tyrants and conquered what freedom we now have. If Villard's childish theory were true then the American Revolutionary War should have strengthened British rule in the United States; the Civil War should have established slavery more firmly than ever, the Russian Revolution should have fortified capitalism and restored tsarism; and the Chinese, Ethiopian and Spanish peoples were to have lain down before the Japanese, Italian and German invaders and deemed all armed resistance futile—win, lose or draw. A fine thing indeed it would be for the fascist marauders were the masses imbued with such a sheep-like pacifism.

Throughout history the masses, who have to do the fighting and dying, have always hated war. Hence, the modern trade union, democratic and Socialist movements, with the Soviet Union in the lead, are the great enemy of war. But if, in spite of all their efforts to maintain peace, they are attacked by fascist forces, they, as in Spain, China and Ethiopia, will fight back with every resource at their command and with a justified confidence that, contrary to the isolationists' non-resistance pacifism, military success for them would mean victory for democracy and progress.

The isolationists' main argument in support of their theory that "right never wins on the field of battle" and that therefore there is nothing to do but surrender to the fascists, goes like

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this—"We went into the World War to make the world safe for democracy and see what we've got: fascism." Thus, says Villard:

"In 1917 . . . we went to war to oppose dictatorship and autocracies, and now, after less than twenty years, civilization is in danger of perishing at the hands of dictators, and democracy everywhere has its back to the wall."

Ex-President Hoover, upon returning from his recent course in fascism in Europe, sang the same song:

"You will recollect we were once animated by a desire to save the world for democracy. The only result that time was to sow dragon's teeth which sprang up into dictatorships. We can never herd the world into the paths of righteousness with the dogs of war."

This argument is repeated interminably by the isolationists. Never does one make a speech but what he states this proposition, and in a dogmatic manner as though it were gospel from on high. Thus the railroad union paper, *Labor,* endorsing the above-cited quotation from Hoover, asks: "Who, for instance, would care to challenge it?"

Yet this whole isolationist contention is only a glib falsification. It completely misrepresents the issues and the outcomes of the World War. The war of 1914-18 was a brutal struggle between two rival groups of aggressive imperialist powers for mastery of the world. Contrary to the isolationists, as far as the warring governments on both sides were concerned, the question of defending democracy was simply not on the war's agenda. Wilson's famous slogan, "Make the world safe for democracy," served the demagogic role of drawing the peoples into the imperialistic slaughter.

But if democracy was not the war objective of the "Allied" governments or the Central Powers, the masses, despite their chauvinistic liberal, Socialist and trade union leaders, who on both sides identified their aims with those of their governments, nevertheless seized upon the situation created by the war (and utilized Wilson's peace and democracy slogans) to develop a gigantic struggle for the extension of human rights. Consequently, the World War, instead of giving birth to fascism, as the isolationists from Hoover to Thomas are so cocksure in asserting, had as its first major result, contrary to the purposes of the war-makers, the greatest wave of mass democratic and revolutionary spirit in the whole history of capitalism.

In England, France, the United States and many other countries this vast democratic wave, caused by mass opposition to the war and to the existing conditions of capitalist exploitation, expressed itself in a huge growth of democratic organizations and struggles. In England, the trade unions increased from 3,918,809 members in 1914 to 8,023,761 in 1920; and in this country the American Federation of Labor, during the same period, jumped its membership from 2,020,671 to 4,079,740, despite the "no-strike, no-organizing" deal of the Gompers clique with the employers and the Wilson administration. There was also a large expansion of workers' political parties, cooperatives, etc., in many lands, together with innumerable huge strikes, extensions of social legislation, etc.

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In Russia, Germany, Austria and Italy the democratic upsurge developed into a revolutionary assault upon the capitalist system. The toiling masses, aroused by the monstrous war, toppled over the empires of the Romanovs, Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs, and also threatened the capitalist system all over Eastern Europe. They set up Soviets in Russia, Germany and Hungary; and in Italy they also came to the very brink of the proletarian revolution.

That is what happened directly as a result of the World War—the greatest extension of democracy in world history. If fascism later came to power in various countries, the reason therefore is not to be found abstractly in the great war, as the isolationists state, but in the concrete fact that the reformist Social-Democrats in Germany, Austria and Italy refused to go through with the revolution. The war, by revolutionizing the masses, placed socialism on history's immediate order of business all over Eastern and Central Europe. The Bolsheviks proved equal to the situation in Russia, but the opportunist leaders of the Second International in revolution-ripe Germany, Italy and Austria did not believe in the revolution. After years of unchecked opportunism, they proved themselves counter-revolutionary when the great test came. So they betrayed the revolution and devoted their efforts to revive stricken capitalism. The end result of their policy is the fascism of today. These actual facts belie the superficial isolationist demagogy that, "We fought for democracy in 1917 and all we got was fascism."

## WOULD A DEFENSIVE WAR AGAINST FASCISM MAKE AMERICA TURN FASCIST?

The surrender isolationists, to their unfounded allegations that international concerted peace action by the democratic peoples leads to war, to a lost war, to a war in which the cause of liberty must be destroyed, add the further gratuitous assumption that if the United States should be finally forced into an anti-fascist war by fascist aggression, it would, by its entry into such a war, inevitably thereby become transformed into a fascist dictatorship. Thus Norman Thomas, in his new defeatist book, says, "... the minute America enters war, democracy will yield to the totalitarian state necessary for totalitarian war, military fascism (or its equivalent) will win a major triumph." Villard says substantially the same in a recent issue of the *Nation:* "That we shall lost our democracy admits of no argument whatever. Just read the May Bill.... But even without the May Bill, we should still come out of the war a fascist state."

This argument the isolationists shout upon all occasions as a sort of heaven-sent truth. They consider it unchallengeable. It is a cornerstone in their whole structure of argument that the masses must do nothing to resist the war-making fascists. They seek to sustain it by declaring that the present international struggle is simply one between rival camps of imperialists, as in 1914, and that in such a struggle the United States could and would fight only for its own imperialist aims. Then, contradicting their previous argument that the United States

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*did* fight for democracy in the first World War, they assert that, as in 1914, the issue of democracy could not be directly involved in such a war.

This whole conception of the isolationists is basically wrong. The international struggle now developing is fundamentally different from that immediately preceding 1914. Then the capitalist system was still comparatively strong and healthy; its general crisis was only in the initial stages. World markets were expanding; industry was developing and bourgeois-democracy was on the upgrade. Trade unions, cooperatives and Socialist Parties were growing, and ameliorative social legislation was being widely enacted. The war developed as a struggle between two groups of capitalist powers for imperialist aims; both were on the offensive and both were more or less equally responsible for the war. Neither group bore, appreciably more than the other, any special threat to or promise for democracy. While England, France and the United States were somewhat more democratic than Germany and Austria, this advantage on their side was offset by the reactionary weight of their ally, tsarist Russia. In such a situation obviously the workers had no stake in either side of the war and their correct policy, enunciated by Lenin, was to oppose both sets of warring governments and to seek to transform the imperialist war into the socialist revolution.

The world situation of 1938, however, presents a vastly altered picture. Today capitalism is far advanced in its general crisis. Socialism has conquered on one-sixth of the earth's surface; capitalist world markets are shrinking, industry is stagnant, class and international tensions are acute, and everywhere the capitalists are on the offensive against the living standards, mass organizations, social legislation and democratic liberties of the masses. But the capitalist general crisis develops unevenly, and here, precisely, is the key to the world situation. In fascist Germany, Italy and Japan the capitalist crisis is the most acute; there the economic situation is the worst and class tensions the most explosive. In these countries the capitalists have abolished bourgeois-democracy outright, setting up naked terrorist dictatorships to intensify their exploitation of the toiling masses; they have also embarked upon a violent war-making offensive abroad to capture the world's markets and supplies of raw materials.

Thus, we have a fundamentally different situation than at the outbreak of the 1914-18 war. Instead of two groups of powers, both on the offensive and both on approximately the same level of democracy, there is now one group of powers militantly on the offensive, while the others are on the defensive. Moreover, the offensive fascist powers, having themselves abolished bourgeois-democracy, are making a violent threat to the democracy of the non-fascist states. The war-making, book-burning, freedom-crushing, Jew-baiting, fascist barbarians constitute a malignant menace to the lives, liberties, organizations, culture and national independence of all other peoples.

In this situation the question of democracy becomes the very center of the international struggle. The work-

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ers and other toilers, therefore, have a most decided interest on one side of the fight, armed or otherwise—that of the democracies. Common intelligence demands consequently that the popular masses in the democracies should press their governments, or secure control of them through people's fronts and democratic fronts, to take a firm and united stand against the fascist powers in order to prevent them from enslaving the world and drenching it in blood.

The foregoing analysis leads us directly to giving a negative answer to the isolationists' assertion that the United States, if forced into war by the fascists, would itself inevitably become fascist. For, to make any effective defensive struggle against the fascists internationally—economic, political or military—imperatively requires simultaneously a militant struggle against the fascists at home. Chamberlain and Daladier have made this fact perfectly clear. Hence, Dimitroff is entirely correct when he says that in order to curb the international fascist bandits "governments are necessary which base themselves on the masses of the people, which take their interests and their wishes into consideration, governments which are ready to fight against the fascist enemy from without."

In the first World War the great democratic upsurge, as we have seen, came mostly towards the end of the war and as a sort of by-product of it. But in the present developing world war the democratic surge forward of the masses begins at the very outset of the war, or even before, and is a central result of the anti-fascist struggle. This is because of the necessity, in order to repel the foreign fascist invaders, to fight against the fascist copperheads at home. In China and Spain this tendency is clearly seen; for these fascist-invaded countries, far from transforming themselves into fascist dictatorships in the war, according to the theory of Thomas, Beard, Hoover, Fish and Co., have, on the contrary, developed a wide extension of popular rights and democratic institutions right in the very midst of their desperate defensive wars. And the same tendency may be expected in every other country which is compelled to enter into active struggle against the fascist warmakers.

### THE WORLD AT A TURNING POINT

Human society is now at the most critical juncture in all its history. In the menacing fascist war threat it confronts the horrible danger of the mass butchery of scores of millions of people and of the violent extinction of the culture and democratic liberties which the people have fought for centuries to attain. The victory of fascism on a world scale would open up an unheard-of era of wars, tyranny, poverty and intellectual darkness.

Only by a determined stand of the democratic peoples of the world can this major disaster be averted. Through people's front movements in the various capitalist countries and the linking of these, together with the Soviet Union, into an unbreakable international chain can the fascist invaders be expelled from China, Spain, Austria, Ethiopia and Czechoslovakia, and the peace of the world be maintained. The struggle for international concerted peace action is the fight for

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peace, for democracy, for progress, for socialism, for civilization itself.

In the world struggle against fascist barbarism the American people bear a heavy responsibility. Their own deepest national interests, as well as those of humanity generally, are at stake. In line, therefore, with its best democratic traditions, this country must stand four-square with the other democratic peoples to protect the world from the overwhelming disaster of fascism. Especially is it necessary for the United States to cooperate closely with the great anti-fascist, peace-loving Soviet Union, the two countries forming a solid core around which the rest of the democratic peoples can rally.

Americans cannot evade the fascist issue by sticking their heads in the sand, as the isolationists urge. Already this policy has done terrible harm by giving the German, Italian and Japanese fascists a free hand ruthlessly to overrun weaker countries. It is obvious that our people must join with other democracies to resist the common enemy. More and more the masses are coming to understand this elementary necessity. The robbers' pact of Munich gave a rude shock to American isolationism. The intensified fascist threat to Latin America, which followed so fast after Munich, has brought the fascist menace right to our door. Great masses of people, hitherto lulled into inactivity by isolationist illusions, are now rapidly awakening to the need for active resistance to the fascist danger, both from within and without. To develop this awakening into active struggle against fascism is the supreme task now before the Communist Party. The time element is vital, the need for action is most urgent, and the weight of the United States may be decisive in the world struggle which is so rapidly developing against fascist barbarism.

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"Our Party has, from the time of its foundation, correctly recognized the question of the Negro people as being of the same decisive significance in the history of the United States as that of the Irish people has been for Great Britain. Karl Marx, whose bold and fundamental treatment of the Irish question laid the foundations for the modern Leninist-Stalinist policy on the national question, clearly recognized the position of the Negroes in America as occupying the same historic role, when he declared: 'Labor with a white skin cannot be free while labor with a black skin is branded.'"—Earl Browder, *Social and National Security*, p. 31.

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# A YEAR OF MEMORABLE ANNIVERSARIES

BY ALEX BITTELMAN

As we come closer to 1939, we approach a year of great and memorable anniversaries.

On January 21, 1939, it will be fifteen years since Lenin died. In March, it will be twenty years since the formation of the Communist International. In June, a month not often remembered, it will be 20 years since the Left wing of the Socialist Party, led by Ruthenberg, came together in national conference and laid the basis for the subsequent organization of the Communist Party. In September we shall celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the formation of our Party itself. The *Daily Worker* will be fifteen years old in February. And in November there will again come around the anniversary of the great socialist revolution—its twenty-second one.

A year of such significant anniversaries, which constitute true milestones in the history of the world and of our own country since the first world imperialist war in 1914-1918, such a year as this presents us with exceptional opportunities for the ideological enrichment and all-around strengthening of our Party as well as of the mass movements of the working class and its allies in the struggle against reaction, fascism and war.

It is a year of great opportunities, and for those we are already beginning to prepare.

### AN AMERICAN WORKING CLASS PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

At the enlarged meeting of our Political Bureau in September, we adopted a report on the preparations for the twentieth anniversary of our Party. In that report we have already sketched in broad outlines the significance of and meaning of our Party for the working class and people of America. We have tried to indicate the answers to the following questions:

What has our Party contributed toward the growth of the political independence of the American working class, to the growth of its organized economic and political strength, to its unity, to the building of its alliance with other exploited and forward-moving social groups? In short, what has our Party contributed to promote the American working class to a position of increasing influence and, eventually, leadership, in the affairs of the nation?

And another question:

What has our Party contributed, through the various phases of the history of the last twenty years, to help the masses of our people, the real nation, to combat the ruthless power



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and exploitation of Big Business, of finance capital, of the reactionary monopolies? Or, to put it in another way, what has our Party contributed to the struggles of the masses of the people for democratic liberties and democracy, for security and well-being, for progress, for peace and the brotherhood of nations, as against imperialist oppression and imperialist war?

And still another question:

What has our Party done to help enlighten the masses on their future, on the great prospects for a happy life for all of our people free from class exploitation and insecurity? What has our Party done to keep the road to that future—to socialism—always brightly lighted, and to help build the steps, the crucial and inescapable next steps, toward the ultimate socialist solution of our fundamental problems?

These are the questions we want answered to the broadest masses of the people in this year of memorable anniversaries. And as we answer these questions, we shall be making clear the central and all-inclusive question: the role of our Party all through its history, and especially its role today, as a political party of the American working class of *a new type.*

* * *

Yes, a new type of party, different from the old type of Socialist Party, or Socialist Labor Party or other political working class groups that preceded us. Of course, when we say different we don't mean unrelated, because, as a matter of plain historic fact, we are very much related to all these older types of workers' parties and groups. And we want, in these anniversaries, to emphasize and demonstrate most particularly this relationship of ours to these older parties and groups. We want to demonstrate that our Party, all of whose founders themselves came from these older parties and groups, has taken over and assimilated the best traditions of the older movements, just as our Party is absorbing and assimilating the best democratic and revolutionary traditions of our people and nation. This makes us the inheritors of all these glorious traditions. It makes us the ones that are bringing these traditions back to life, making them potent in the struggles of today; but it makes us so only because we are a party of a new type. If we were not so, we could have neither inherited nor restored these revolutionary working class and democratic traditions.

We are a Marxist-Leninist party, a party of the social revolution, a party that is developing the capacity to prepare the proletariat for leadership in the affairs of the nation, for the acquisition and exercise of working class power and to organize the victory of the socialist liberation. We are of the type of party that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is, the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

And just because we are that kind of party, we were and are able to make the positive contributions we do to the progress of our class and people. And just because we are a Marxist-Leninist Party we are able to absorb, and to transform into present-day power, the revolutionary traditions of our class and people.

That ours is a new type of party is pretty widely felt by broad circles of

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our people. Only as yet little is understood in these broad circles of what it is that makes us new and different, although we have been in existence for nearly two decades. Making use of the fact that the nature of our Party (the reasons for its being different) is not yet fully understood by the wide masses, the spokesmen of the enemies of the people, of the reactionary, imperialistic and fascist-minded circles of the bourgeoisie, are trying to envelop our Party with all sorts of mysterious, strange and evil-smelling gossip. And this undoubtedly has certain unfavorable effects.

For example: The people see that a numerically small party—our Party, having only a hundred thousand members in a country of one hundred and thirty million, exercises, nevertheless, a significant influence in the general affairs of the country. They see this fact and incline to wonder, especially those that have had little direct contact with our Party organizations. They wonder and ask: How is it possible for such a small party in such a great country to do all these things? It has never been seen before. How is it explained? And wherever there is lack of full clarity on the true nature of our Party as a party of a new type, many of these wonderers and inquirers are no doubt tempted to assume that maybe (who knows?) there *is* something to the malicious gossip of the Dies Committee about the millions of unseen Communists penetrating all nooks and corners of the country. And who knows what all these unseen Communists are doing?

This means that we, the Communists, must spread more light and knowledge among the masses on the nature and role of our Party as the vanguard Party of our class and people. And the coming year of anniversaries gives us for that the best opportunity.

* * *

How then can a hundred thousand Communists do all these good and valuable things for the working class and for the nation? Well, because they are organized *in a Marxist-Leninist Party,* a party of a new type, born in this country at a time in the world's history, in 1919, when capitalism as a system had entered into its general crisis and when a new system, the socialist system, the system of the future of the world, was establishing itself on one-sixth of the earth, in the Soviet Union.

This meant that our Party has had several decisive *advantages* which no other party had or could have. These advantages explain a lot about the nature of our Party. What are they?

1. *Our Marxist-Leninist theory.* As we went on, progressively mastering this theory, not as a dogma but as a guide to action in the interests of our class and people (and this was no easy or smooth process for us), we have been learning better to orientate ourselves in the world, to discover the inner connection of events, to foresee their course, and to grasp the line of their development, not only in the present but also in the future. We were thus better prepared than others to meet oncoming changes and to help prepare the people for them. One can point to three such milestones and turning points as our efforts to orientate the people toward the tasks of the present epoch of world socialist libera-

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tion which was marked by the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia and by the general crisis of the capitalist system. These efforts were initiated by the very birth of our Party in 1919.

Next were our efforts to orientate the masses toward the oncoming of the crisis of 1929 way before it actually broke loose, at the time when capitalist apologists (followed by Lovestone) were singing of "eternal" prosperity.

Lastly, our efforts to orientate the people toward the coming of the world offensive of fascism, the emergence of a new main enemy, and the way to meet him by the united and people's front. And with it, our projection of the clear Marxist-Leninist light on the line of *future* development of the present struggles against fascism, showing them to be a stage in the struggle for socialism. It is clear that these contributions proved a source of great strength and influence for our Party.

2. *The victorious advances of socialism in the Soviet Union.* These advances, achieved under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, revolutionizing the minds of the people of all countries and projecting before them the path to their own future, have given our Party another advantage of which, unfortunately, we have not always made the best use. The demonstrated possibility of socialism and its great superiority over capitalism could not but make our work more effective, increasing the influence of our Party way beyond its numerical strength. But, about all, we have profited, as could have all progressive forces so minded, by the powerful and decisive role of the socialist state in the present crucial struggle of all peoples against the fascist aggressors and for democracy, peace and national independence. It was this decisive role of the Soviet Union that, in the main, has made possible and practical our present central policy of struggle against reaction, fascism and war—the policy of the democratic front—the policy which has done so much to enable a hundred thousand Communists to become such a valuable and important factor in the life and progress of a people of one hundred and thirty million.

3. *The model Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the Communist International.* We are consciously and deliberately learning from their experience and achievements. The new *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* will enable everybody so inclined, to learn, and will prove a most potent ideological and political weapon in the struggle for the democratic front and in the building of our Party. Thus, with our own future so clearly and brilliantly before our eyes, how could we fail to be of great help to the American people today in finding their path to progress, to the maintenance and extension of democracy, to security, to peace, even though we are as yet only a hundred thousand? It is clear that the American people want more positive contributions from us. It is also clear that only by increasing considerably our numbers, and by strengthening our Marxist-Leninist ideology, shall we be able to do more.

The history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—embodied in the new book, the book of our

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time—is the history of three revolutions: the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905, the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February, 1917, and the socialist revolution of October, 1917. It was a course of struggle which led the working class of Russia, heading the majority of the people, first to the overthrow of tsarism, then to the overthrow of the rule of the landlords and capitalists, then to the defeat of the armed foreign intervention during the civil war, then to the building up of the Soviet state and the socialist society. All of this under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the Marxist-Leninist Party of a new type, the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

In taking this Party as our model, we are seeking to build ourselves into this kind of a leader of the masses against their enemies. We seek to make our Party this kind of a vanguard of our class and people in the struggle for democracy against the offensive of reaction and fascism. We want to become as effective a fighter against imperialist war, as effective a leader of the masses from one phase of the struggle to another, guiding them to the victory of the socialist liberation.

The Communist International, formed at its first congress in March, 1919, upon the initiative of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, is also a new type of international working class organization. It is a Marxist-Leninist International.

Our affiliation with it has given us the advantage of counsels of great wisdom, wisdom based on the rich store of experience of the international revolutionary movement lighted up with the Marxist-Leninist theory. It is impossible to overestimate the strength which the various parties derive from their affiliation with the Communist International which, headed by Dimitroff, exercises such a decisive influence in the world struggle for working class unity, for the unity of the peoples of all countries against fascism, war and capitalism. The manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the occasion of the twenty-first anniversary of the October Revolution, and Comrade Dimitroff's statement on the same occasion, proceeding from Comrade Stalin's analyses and leading ideas, once more give to the working class and all enemies of fascism a program of unity and united action against the Munich conspiracy, formulating a fundamental policy and outlining the perspective of victory.

4. *We have been trying to live and struggle as a vanguard party of our class.* This is another advantage we have over the older working class parties and groups. In practice it meant that Communists have always been found, and are so found today, in the very front line of struggle against the enemies of the working class and of the people. Always in the most exposed and dangerous places, taking the brunt of the enemies' attacks. Self-sacrificing, devoted, and loyal to their principles and to the masses. First to move forward and last to retreat. Our entire twenty years of existence prove this to be so. It was so, because we sought to function as the vanguard party of our class and people.

In this capacity we were blazing

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trails and doing pioneering work for new and more modern policies and forms of organization for the working class and its allies, among the farmers, on the economic and political fields. We contributed significantly to the rise of the modern liberation movement of the Negro people, to the awakening of America's youth, to bringing the middle classes closer to the working class, to fusing the native and foreign born masses into a closer American national unity, to bringing forward the working women into more active participation in the nation's life. Last but not least, we contributed a goodly share toward promoting closer relations of cooperation between the working class and the people of the United States, on the one hand, with the workers and peoples of other countries, most particularly of Latin America, Canada, China, Spain, and above all—of the Soviet Union, whose collaboration the American nation needs so much today in the struggle for peace and against fascist aggression.

In the same capacity of vanguard party, we always sought and continue to seeek to bring into our Party the most conscious and creative forces of the working class and its allies. Of this, it is true, we have not done enough. This still remains one of our weakest points: recruiting the best elements of the working class into our midst and building the circulation of the Party's press. This is our serious lag, which we are now working to overcome. Yet to the extent that we did consciously and planfully seek to bring into our midst and to promote to leadership the best elements of the working class, we have been building ourselves into a vanguard party thus enjoying a great advantage.

5. *Ours is a Party organization built on the Bolshevik principle of democratic centralism.* We all know what it is; but many outside our Party still do not. And this is a pity. When people still wonder how a hundred thousand Communists can do all the good things they are doing, one of the answers is this: they are well knit together into *a system* of Party organization resting at the base on the decisive branch or unit, leading through various gradations to the National Committee; Party officials, from bottom to top, are elected and are responsible to those who elected them; Party policies are discussed by the membership, which acts on all changes in policy either directly or through democratically elected representatives to conventions, the national convention being the highest governing body of the Party; every Party organization is subject to the discipline of the next higher one; and once a decision has been made, the Party acts like one man with cohesion, harmony and utmost discipline.

Ours is a democratic, centralized and disciplined organization. Our Party Constitution fully represents this fact. *The great and all-important job now is to develop to the full the political activities of our branches and units, to build them up into true mass leaders in their localities, to improve radically the Marxist-Leninist education of our membership, and to build up a competent corps of Marxist-Leninist teachers and writers.*

6. *We do not tolerate in our midst opportunists, capitulators or defeatists.* This is another source of strength

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to our Party and a great advantage we have over the older working class parties and groups. We have not always been alert enough to these carriers of enemy influence in our midst, because this is what opportunism is: the influence of bourgeois ideology. We have not always been quick enough to detect opportunism in various sectarian and reformist deviations from Marxism-Leninism. On this score we have still to learn a good deal. Yet to the extent that we are learning it, we become stronger.

Thus, in the course of our Party's history we have sought to root out sectarianism, remnants of which we still have to contend with. We fought the opportunism of Lovestone and Lovestoneism to the point of eliminating the carriers of this disease from our Party. We fought Trotskyism which, while in our Party, was a most vicious form of opportunism, eventually eliminating also the carriers of this disease from our midst. Today after having degenerated still further on the road of treachery and betrayal, both Trotskyism and Lovestoneism stand exposed before the whole world as agents of fascism, wreckers, plotters against working class and people's unity. The factional struggle in our Party, which prevailed from 1923 to 1928, had seriously hampered this struggle against opportunism in our midst. But with the liquidation of the factional fight, the Party has been fused together, presenting an ever growing and effective resistance to all deviations from the Marxist-Leninist positions, displaying greater alertness to all manifestations of opportunism.

Our Party Constitution expresses also this fact. And now more than ever we need such alertness on the part of every Party member to the machinations of the Trotsky-Lovestone agents of fascism as well as irreconcilable struggle against all sectarian and reformist deviations from Marxism-Leninism.

### STRENGTHEN THE LINK BETWEEN OUR PARTY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY TRADITIONS OF OUR CLASS AND PEOPLE

Especially since the Eighth Convention of our Party, we have become more conscious of our American roots. Through these years, we have engaged more actively than heretofore, under the guidance of our leaders, Browder and Foster, in assimilating the revolutionary traditions of the working class and of the American people, integrating them closely with the Marxist-Leninist theory. The Tenth Party Convention will stand out as a milestone on that road.

Together with the other progressive forces of the country, we have successfully sought to bring to life the revolutionary and democratic traditions of our country from the days of Washington and on through the long road of struggle for democracy and national independence—a road of struggle symbolized in the minds of the people by Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln. This we must continue even more broadly and effectively. Remembering in this connection especially the great truth expressed by the Communist International in its November manifesto that "the working class is the backbone of the nation, the bulwark of its liberty, dignity and independence"—the chief force in the struggle against fascist aggression and

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against the capitulators to fascism in our own country.

At the same time, we must devote more attention to the strengthening of the organic links which bind us to the revolutionary traditions of our class. And our class, as we know, has glorious traditions.

Remember the period of William H. Sylvis, the leader and organizer of the American workers during the time of Marx and Engels. Sylvis in his time stood for the most advanced development of the American working class, and that was why he was seeking guidance from Marx and Engels, and collaboration with them. It was under his leadership, as head of the National Labor Union, that the Chicago convention of the union, in 1867, raised the question of establishing contact with the First International of Marx and Engels. The convention adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas, the efforts of the working classes in Europe to acquire political power, to improve their social conditions, and to emancipate themselves from the bondage under which they were and still are, are gratifying proof of the progress of justice, enlightenment, and civilization;

"Resolved, that the National Labor Convention hereby declares its sympathy, and promises its cooperation to the organized working men of Europe in their struggle against political and social injustice."

Unfortunately, his early death (in July, 1869), prevented him from developing much further this collaboration of the American labor movement with Marx and Engels. But the results of this first effort bore fruit in the succeeding years. Sylvis was one of our great predecessors.

Coming nearer to the period of imperialism (the close of the nineteenth and opening of the twentieth centuries), we at once become conscious of the roles of Debs and Haywood. These were the builders of progressive trade unionism in the United States and of its socialist movement, men who have carried forward the great traditions of Sylvis, though with many setbacks and frequent loss of orientation.

And as we continue to unwind the chain of tradition, coming upon our own days, we meet the founders and leaders of our own Party: Ruthenberg, Foster, Browder, Ella Reeve Bloor, and Ford. The historical approaches to the actual organization of our Party in 1919 are lined by the activities of Debs, Haywood and Foster, pioneer builders of the modern trade union and labor movement of America. You will find these approaches to our Party built for us by the anti-imperialist and anti-war struggles led by Debs, Ruthenberg and Browder. These were the mass struggles which, linked to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, laid the basis for the emergence of our Party, the Party of a new type, the Marxist-Leninist Party of America headed by Browder, Foster, Bloor and Ford.

The anniversary year of 1939 should be the occasion for making these traditions, and our organic links with them, live and vibrate in the minds and struggles of the masses as they never did before. It will help most effectively to promote the unity of our class and of our people for the great task of curbing the capitulators to fascism at home and of smashing the fascist offensive that is coming from abroad. It goes without saying that this will prove a most powerful help

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to building the numerical and ideological strength of our Party. Because —all those to whom these traditions have meaning, all those whom we can move to cherish these traditions and to see the organic link of our Party and its leaders with them, all those, whether in the labor movement or in other progressive movements of the people, the tens of thousands of the active and creative leaders of the masses in their present struggles, will begin to see more clearly that our Party is *their* party, that their place is in it, in its ranks and in its leadership.

Let us help them do it.

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"We Communists are people of a special mold. We are made of special material. We are those who comprise the army of the great proletarian strategist, the army of Comrade Lenin. There is nothing higher than the honor of belonging to this army. There is nothing higher than the title of member of the Party founded and led by Comrade Lenin. It is not given to all to be members of such a Party. It is not given to all to withstand the stress and storm that accompanies membership in such a Party. Sons of the working class, sons of poverty and struggle, sons of incredible deprivation and heroic effort—these are the ones who must first of all be members of such a Party. That is why the Leninist Party, the Communist Party, at the same time calls itself the Party of the working class.

"In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of holding aloft and guarding the purity of the great title of member of the Party. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will fulfil your bequest with honor."—Joseph Stalin, *The Lenin Heritage.*

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# THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE

BY ROB F. HALL
*State Secretary, Communist Party, Alabama*

SHORTLY after the President's National Emergency Council published its *Report* at the end of July, on the economic conditions of the South, Comrade Browder declared:

"All progressives and true democrats, whatever their other differences, will, if they are at all awake to the realities of the day, rally around this report and help to develop its implied program of progress for the South."

Comrade Browder's remark thus anticipated the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, held in Birmingham, November 20-23.

The National Executive Committee report, which served as the basis for President Roosevelt's characterization of the South as the nation's No. 1 economic problem, raised the problem very simply:

"The paradox of the South is that while it is blessed with immense wealth, its people as a whole are the poorest in the country."

Avoiding the basic causes and ignoring insofar as possible the Negro question, the report nevertheless showed how the low-income levels of the South were related to the ownership and abuse of the South's natural resources by absentee, monopoly capital. It demonstrated how this differential in income was reflected in differentials in housing, health and education facilities. It put on the order of business a score of challenging problems for discussion and solution.

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare was called as the answer of the Southern people to these problems.

### KEYNOTES OF THE CONFERENCE

From its very inception, the conference attracted a broad response. The original sponsors included the most progressive Southern Democrats and New Dealers, among them Congressmen and Senators, Southern labor leaders, both A. F. of L. and C.I.O., prominent figures from church and educational circles, leaders in the civil rights movement in the South, and Southern leaders of the Negro people.

The broad character of the sponsoring committee was reflected in the composition of the delegates. Committee officials had expected only two or three hundred delegates and were not prepared for the 1,250 who registered.

The keynote of the conference was given in the opening session by Dr.



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Frank Graham, president of the University of North Carolina.

"The Southern Conference for Human Welfare," he said, "takes its stand here tonight on the American Bill of Rights and the Sermon of the Mount—a simple stand of American democracy and Christianity."

Dr. Graham departed from his prepared speech at the very outset of his remarks to indict vigorously the Nazi persecution of Jews and Catholics, and to pay tribute to the Negro people. He left no doubt that the Negro question was to be almost central in the business of the conference. "The black man," he said, "is the primary test of democracy and Christianity."

In another sense, too, Dr. Graham gave the keynote to all the later deliberations of the conference. Here was a gathering of intensely patriotic Southerners, wrapped up in Southern problems, and jealous of their obligation to solve these problems. But this did not mean the narrow, fanatical sectionalism of the past. Dr. Graham pictured the South's problem as related to the problem of the nation, and he declared that an economic or social lag in one part of the country affects all parts of the country. On this the delegates agreed, a demonstration of the fact that the *new* South has a *national* point of view. On this basis, Dr. Graham made a strong appeal for federal aid for education which made it unreservedly clear that these representatives of the *new* South would no longer go along with the old narrow interpretation of states' rights.

Mrs. Roosevelt, Aubrey Williams (who spoke not only as representing the W.P.A. but as a native of Birmingham) and Justice Hugo Black, each in his own manner, reiterated these general principles. Thus, Justice Black, in his speech, accepting the Thomas Jefferson award for outstanding service as a Southern liberal leader, declared:

"I accept this medal as a symbol confided to me for the many Southerners who stand with Jefferson in the belief that good governments give first importance to promoting the welfare and happiness of human beings —*all* human beings—by assuring equal justice to *all*, regardless of race or persuasion."

The remarks of the Justice, which were an impressive dedication, almost a consecration, to democracy, came at the conclusion of the conference. His words symbolized the earnestness, the passion for democracy with which the delegates had tackled the problems of the South.

The main work of the conference was carried on through the sections, or panels. Resolutions adopted in the panels were in most cases approved by the conference as a whole.

The suffrage panel urged state and federal action for the elimination of poll taxes and called for the adoption by Congress of a national uniform registration law eliminating the poll tax and other restrictions on the franchise in national elections. It endorsed a drive for a million signatures to petitions in support of this legislation.

The youth section urged federal aid for education, expansion of the National Youth Administration, and inter-racial cooperation in the solution of youth problems. This section, in addition to supporting Roosevelt's peace policy, adopted a resolution to send surplus cotton and wheat to China and Loyalist Spain. The latter

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resolution was regrettably tabled by general session of the conference.

The Farm Tenancy section urged extension of the Bankhead-Jones Act, adequate production loans, and recommended revisions in state laws governing relations between landlords and tenants.

The Harrison-Fletcher Bill for federal aid for education was endorsed in the education section, which also demanded the elimination of differentials in educational facilities for Negroes.

The Civil Rights section centered attention on state laws to supplement the Wagner Act and dealt with responsibility of state governments to enforce the Bill of Rights.

The main resolution on race relations adopted by the conference was an amalgamation of similar resolutions from a number of panels. The resolution declared:

"The protection of the Negro's constitutional rights constitutes one of the vital issues in the South's economic and political progress, since discrimination against the Negro is detrimental not only to him but to the whole South."

The resolution went on to urge:

"That the names of Negroes be placed in jury boxes and that Negroes be allowed to serve on both petit and grand juries.

"That the Negro be permitted to register and participate in party primaries as well as general elections.

"That the intimidation and brutality practiced upon Negroes by police officers be stopped.

"That facilities for education, recreation, housing, and public health be expanded to provide adequate attention to the needs of the Negro population."

The Labor Relations panel brought forward a legislative program including elimination of the Southern wage differential in private industry and on W.P.A.; support of the Wagner Act and Wages-and-Hours Act, and recommendation for state laws of a similar nature; a minimum wage on Southern W.P.A. of not less than 25 cents an hour; expansions of W.P.A.; endorsement of Roosevelt's unity messages to the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. conventions.

The housing and health sections called for federal aid and increased state and local appropriations to meet these needs. The needs of the small business men were dealt with in the freight rates section which called for the abolition of the rate differential, and in the credit panel which endorsed Senator Pepper's bill for credit facilities.

In order to carry through these policies, the delegates set up a permanent organization "to unite the Southern people, to promote the general welfare, to improve economic, social and cultural standards of the Southern people, and to advance Southern democracy in accordance with safeguarding American democratic institutions and ideals."

A broad Southern Council of 118 was set up, including seven representatives from each state. Dr. Frank Graham was named chairman; Mrs. Louise O. Charlton honorary chairman; and Dr. H. C. Nixon, widely known Southern author and educator, executive secretary. The fifteen vice-chairmen include Senator Pepper, a Democratic National Committeeman from Arkansas; Brooks Hays, a Louisville publisher and a Hearst columnist from Georgia; other outstanding Southerners, including A. F. of L.

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and C.I.O. leaders; and two Negroes, John P. Davis and Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune.

### AN ESTIMATE OF THE CONFERENCE

Let us estimate the Southern Conference in the light of Comrade Browder's remarks at the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party:

> "The South . . . has for generations been the stronghold of reaction, the one place in America where modern capitalism was fused —in its most parasitic aspects—with remnants of feudalism, of pre-capitalist society; and on the basis of that fusion of parasitic capitalism and pre-capitalist survivals, the South has played a deadly role in the political life of America. . . . But that old solid South is melting away. . . . And we who want to change the course of our country, who want to turn our country away from the path that is charted out for it by the economic masters of our land, who want to block once and forever the road to reaction and fascism, if we are really practical politicians, we must keep our eyes on the South." *

The Southern Conference demonstrated that in fact the Solid South of bourbons and brigadiers *is* melting away, and that there is developing in the South a strong and articulate leadership for the progressive movement.

The Southern Conference indicated that the Southern people, harassed by deep-seated problems, the solutions for which are long overdue, are determined to secure for themselves and their families more of the fruits of the New Deal, namely, broader democracy and a genuine improvement in their social and economic conditions. In the recent period, it has become increasingly clear to the Southern masses that an essential condition for the attainment of these gains is the broadest unity of the Southern people, regardless of race or color, and an uncompromising rejection of the provocations and prejudices of the old divide-and-rule politics of the Southern tories.

In this sense, we can say that the Southern Conference was a brilliant confirmation of the line of the democratic front advanced by Comrade Browder at the Tenth Convention.

The conference took as its point of departure the President's characterization of the South as economic problem No. 1 of the nation. The N.E.C. report indicated that the problem of the South was first and foremost a problem of low purchasing power, a consequence of the fact that the average income in the South is less than half the average income in the rest of the country.

The inevitable programmatic conclusions inherent in the N.E.C. report resolved themselves, in the conference resolutions, as a demand for legislation which would raise the purchasing power of the South, in the form of wages and farm income. The ownership of Southern resources by absentee monopoly capital and the consequent low income levels have left the state governments unable to meet the costs of essential social services, especially in the spheres of education, housing and health. Therefore, in addition to asking for increased state appropriations for such services, the conference emphatically stated its view that the federal government must take responsibility for a drastic improvement and extension of these services.

The reactionaries viewed this as a break with the old traditions of states'

* *The Communist*, July, 1938, pp. 595-596.

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rights; but the delegates correctly identified the interests of the South with those of the nation and, mindful of the problem of absentee ownership, drew the logical conclusions.

There was at the same time a recognition of the fact that, while the South is economic problem No. 1, the rehabilitation of the South might very well make it, as *Fortune* magazine says, economic hope No. 1. Any steps, including large-scale public works, leading to an increase in the buying power of the South, would open up a broad new market, materially aiding recovery throughout the nation. This applies not only to consumers goods, but to producer goods; for the South is not content to continue, as in the past, with 28 per cent of the national population and only 16 per cent of the factories, machines and tools. A balanced economy is required, if the South is to contribute to its own and the nation's recovery.

At the same time, the conference made it clear that the progressive industrialization of the South did not constitute an invitation to sweatshops and run-away industries seeking cheap labor and municipal subsidies. On the contrary, the responsibility of industry to pay a living wage, and the responsibility of state and federal governments to enforce minimum wages, guarantee collective bargaining, and eliminate the Southern wage differential, were keystones in the programmatic structure of the conference.

### CERTAIN SHORTCOMINGS

The conference had, of course, certain shortcomings. Obviously, it was not perfectly organized. It did not run smoothly. The Southern progressives are just now getting acquainted. It was evident that the leadership of the conference did not know on which forces to rely, even for such tasks as the organization of a panel, the conduct of committees, the running of large sessions. But this inexperience was visibly remedied before the conference ended.

More serious was the shortcoming in composition. On the positive side, this was undoubtedly the broadest conference ever held in the South. For the first time Southern middle class elements collaborated with labor, with farmers and with the Negro people in the joint solution of their problems. But broad as it was, there should have been even more representatives of middle class groups.

From time to time, during the period of conference preparations. there would arise rumors that "there is a danger there will not be enough labor delegates," that there will be "too many professionals and middle class elements." Even some of our comrades, who naturally watched the conference preparations closely and helped wherever possible, were influenced by these scares. But from the very beginning, the danger lay in the other direction, namely, that the middle classes, which are not so well organized as labor, would not be adequately represented. This experience underscores the necessity for labor, and all other groups engaged in building the Southern Conference movement, to concentrate their efforts on winning middle class support for the program of the conference.

Secondly, the A. F. of L. was not adequately represented, although many A. F. of L. leaders, including

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William Green's Southern representative, George Googe, pledged support.

Thirdly, although the Farmers Union was represented by its state leaders from Alabama and Louisiana, no delegates from the Farm Bureau were present. Generally, farm representation was weak.

This weakness in composition expressed itself in some of the resolutions adopted. In some instances, the formulations were sectarian. Especially unfortunate is the fact that while almost a complete program of labor legislation was adopted, only a few resolutions deal directly and obviously with the problems affecting the middle classes. This may to some extent mitigate against the building of the broadest conceivable movement of the Southern people.

Naturally, there was a reason for the character of the resolutions. The fact that such a conference could have been held in the South, adopting as it did such a clear-cut progressive program, reflects the strength of our young Southern labor movement which gave leadership to the conference movement. But certain sectarian tendencies which were evidenced reflect the *immaturity* of this young labor movement. Labor in the South is only *beginning* to assimilate the principles of the democratic front tactic which calls for the broad unity of all democratic and progressive elements, on a program which meets the essential needs of the people.

There were in attendance at the conference about fifteen members of the Socialist Party, representing some unions and mass organizations. Some of these worked constructively for a practical progressive program. A few, however, of the Norman Thomas school, followed the line of the two or three Trotskyites in their midst and consistently attempted to disrupt the unity of the conference. But they were unable to fulfill their boast that they would "split the conference wide open," succeeding only in discrediting themselves with the conference leadership as well as with the honest, constructive Socialists.

### THE NEGRO PEOPLE AND THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

One of the outstanding achievements of the Southern Conference was the advancement of unity between the white progressives and the Negro people.

In addition to the main resolution on the Negro question cited earlier, resolutions were adopted calling for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys and for federal and state anti-lynching legislation.

About two hundred and fifty to three hundred Negro delegates were registered and a larger number visited the sessions each day. Two Negroes were elected as vice-chairmen at large. Almost every state delegation, in nominating its quota of seven to the Council, included one or two Negroes.

The conference leadership approached the preparations of the conference, in the opinion of this writer, without full clarity on the Negro question. Realizing that the economic and cultural levels of the Southern whites could not be raised without at the same time improving the welfare of the Negro people, some of the promoters of the conference, however, thought more in terms of what the white progressives "could do for the

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Negro" rather than in terms of mutual collaboration for the welfare of both. In short, they did not fully see the Negro people as a force which could contribute greatly, in its own right, to the solution of these joint problems, and without which these problems could not be solved.

But out of the joint efforts of Negro and white, working together in the hectic days of the conference, fighting against provocations, struggling for unity, there came more and more clarity. Many Southern white progressives probably learned more about the Negro question in those four days than they had throughout their lives.

The issue was brought forth most sharply when the Birmingham City Commission, at the instigation of an agent of the Republican Party and some tory Democrats, sent police officers to the municipal auditorium to enforce an old ordinance requiring Negroes and whites to sit in separate sections of the hall. The police later broadened the interpretation of this ordinance to apply not only to public buildings, such as the auditorium, but also to the churches in which panel meetings were taking place.

There were immediate repercussions in a number of panels then in session, and resolutions of protest were passed in the farm tenancy, race relations, and youth panels.

The conference leadership, including the most advanced Negro delegates, recognized at once that this issue had been brought forward in an effort to break up the conference. Such Negro leaders as John P. Davis of the National Negro Congress pointed this out to the Negro delegates and urged them not to be provoked and fall into the trap of the reactionaries. This course was accepted by the Negro delegates and a resolution expressing the disapproval of the delegates at the enforcement of this ordinance was drawn up to be presented at the labor relations panel.

At this panel, addressed by Aubrey Williams and attended by more than 2,000 persons, the resolution was presented. A motion to table was defeated and the resolution passed by a large majority. When the same resolution was later presented before the general session by the resolutions committee, it passed unanimously.

It is interesting that the handful of Trotskyites, with characteristic attempts at disruption and wrecking, proposed that the Negro delegates bolt the conference and advocated the picketing of the meetings at which Mrs. Roosevelt and Mr. Justice Black were to speak.

Mrs. Roosevelt contributed greatly to the clarity of the conference on the Negro question, in her talks in which she urged equal opportunity for all, and in several off-the-record incidents. At the height of the reactionary agitation against the conference on the Negro question, Mrs. Roosevelt arrived at the meeting of the youth panel, where the segregation order was already being enforced. Espying the prominent Negro woman leader, Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, she walked across the floor and publicly shook hands with her. This little gesture was more significant in life than in its telling; but it symbolized the unity of Negro and white that was developing in the conference.

A symbol of the magnificent unity of Negro and white which was ad-

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vancing throughout the conference was the meeting at which Mrs. Roosevelt spoke. Seven thousand persons packed the auditorium, of whom at least 3,000 were Negroes. Two thousand more were unable to get in. This was the largest inter-racial meeting held in the South since Reconstruction and will long be remembered.

### THE CONFERENCE UNDER ATTACK

"All progress in the South," declared Comrade Browder in the *New Masses,* for August 23, "is conditioned upon the destruction of the old Bourbon machine of the Democratic Party."

The Bourbon machine was not slow to see the threat which this broad democratic movement contained for its hegemony. From the very beginning, the conference was under attack, with the Republican Party agents cooking up the plots and the tory Democrat stooges executing them.

Although their provocations around the Jim-Crow ordinance failed, the conference resolution criticizing this ordinance gave them an issue they calculated they could best use. An unofficial organization called the Women's Democratic Clubs of Jefferson County called a protest meeting, attended by about 200 of Birmingham's better known Liberty Leaguers, coal operators, and remnants of the old Ku Klux Klan.

Mrs. Louise O. Charlton and other representatives of the conference were refused an opportunity to be heard, while this reactionary crew proceeded to pass resolutions condemning the conference and charging that it was "inspired by Communists" and financed by Washington and Moscow. Postmaster Cooper Green, Congressman Luther Patrick and Mrs. Charlton, all leading Democrats, were attacked, and a demand came for Mrs. Charlton's resignation from the Democratic State Executive Committee. The reactionary clique demanded an investigation by the Dies Committee which, oddly, must have been anticipated by Mr. Dies, because he already had investigators in the city throughout the conference.

The attack continued for several weeks, but a majority of the conference leaders maintained cool heads. Mrs. Charlton answered the Red-baiters calmly and courageously. The press, which had criticized the conference, concluded that the Liberty Leaguers had overplayed their hand, and we find Grover Hall, editor of the conservative (often reactionary) *Montgomery Advertiser,* writing as follows:

> "The Dies Committee on Un-Americanism, whatever un-Americanism may be, sticks its long nose into the affairs of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which the *Advertiser* recently denounced for certain offenses it committed in its resolutions. . . . Because Mrs. Charlton is a lady and a Christian, we doubt that she will now take our advice, but we advise her nevertheless to tell Chairman Dies' investigator to go to hell, in other words, treat him rough and tell him nothing. . . .
>
> ". . . No citizen said anything at Birmingham that he did not have a right, under the United States Constitution, to say. No resolution adopted by the conference is subversive or unlawful, however deplorable it may be for other reasons. The conference was a lawful assembly of American citizens to sit in judgment upon law and custom. . . . It is not the business of the federal Congress to know who suggested and organized the conference. It is not the business of the federal Congress to know whether attendants were Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Communists or Populites. . . . And so the *Advertiser*

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. . . wishes to express its contempt and scorn for the impudent Dies Committee that now dares to question the free-born citizens that originated and participated in this ill-fated [sic!] conference."

While we can afford to discount Editor Hall's estimate of the Conference as "ill-fated," though sharing as we do his healthy contempt and scorn for Dies and his committee, we think there is a still better way of handling the Liberty League enemies of the conference movement. Since the conference, the fight has been too much on issues selected by the reactionaries. If the conference will come forward on issues of its own choosing, based on the excellent and popular program adopted at the conference, the Liberty Leaguers will find the going very rough.

Such issues include the decisions of the conference in support of the Harrison-Fletcher bill; the national health program; the campaign for the elimination of the poll tax, especially the petition drive; extension of the Bankhead-Jones Act; and the abolition of the Southern wage and freight differentials. A campaign throughout the South for such legislation will rally in its support the broadest sentiment. It is the duty of every Southern progressive to put his shoulder to the wheel for organization and education behind the conference objective.

The main job, of course, is still to be done. The Bourbons are still entrenched in the Democratic machine. The conference has merely given voice and leadership to the formation of the progressive ranks for the long fight ahead. The complete defeat of the Bourbons requires the broadening out of the conference movement in every state through activities along the lines indicated.

### THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE SOUTH

As stated above, Comrade Browder anticipated the Southern Conference in his discussion on the N.E.C. report. This is no coincidence. Our Party has for many years given earnest study to the problems of the South on the scientific basis of Marxist-Leninist principle.

Southern state organizations of the Communist Party were represented at the conference by five Southern Communist delegates. Our Party contributed in a modest but constructive manner to the success of the conference. This participation of Communist delegates at the Southern Conference reflects the fact that Southern progressives are becoming aware of the progressive and constructive role played by our Party in the preservation and furthering of democracy and the raising of living standards.

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare has given a strong impetus to progressivism in the South. The fruition of its purposes depends on the greater strengthening of the progressive movement in the South. In strengthening this movement, our Party has before it a great task. On this basis, our Party can and must proceed to recruit from the progressive ranks many hundreds of new members. By our growth and greater participation our Party will gain for itself greater recognition as an integral part of the developing democratic front in the South.

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# THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT AND THE NORTHWEST ELECTIONS

BY MORRIS RAPORT

*Secretary, Northwest District, Communist Party*

THE results of the election campaign in the Pacific Northwest cannot be considered apart from the results nationally. The sweeping victory in the state of Washington for the progressives and their defeat in the state of Oregon stem from the same set of factors that operated to a varying degree in the other states of the Union. Moreover, an analysis of the setback received by the progressive forces in Oregon provides conclusive proof that the Republican gains throughout the nation were not due to popular opposition to the New Deal.

In order to evaluate correctly the different results in Washington and Oregon, and to draw the proper conclusions, the two states must be dealt with separately.

## OREGON

The Oregon primaries took place right after the Seattle city election campaign. The forces of progress in Oregon drew some elementary conclusions from this election. Sufficient unity was developed between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. in the primary campaign to defeat the reactionary Governor Martin and to win the gubernatorial nomination for a progressive candidate.

Success in the primaries, however, offered no guarantee of victory in the final elections. In the primaries the reactionary camp was split between Republicans and the reactionary forces in the Democratic Party headed by Governor Martin. Hence, victory for the progressive forces in the Democratic primaries was within easy reach even on a narrow united front basis. After the primaries, however, the people were faced with a reactionary Democratic and Republican coalition. The unity of the progressives as it existed in the primaries was inadequate to insure the defeat of the combined forces of reaction.

Triumph for the progressive forces could have been achieved only through greater unity between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. and through extending the democratic front far beyond the labor unions. The top officialdom of the A. F. of L., however, refused to endorse the progressive candidate for governor, playing a "neutral" game, which in effect provided direct support to the Republican candidate. And, with unity lacking in the ranks of labor, the middle class and



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the farmers were left to drift on their own.

Furthermore, the progressive slate, headed by the candidate for governor, Hess, failed to provide leadership and a progressive program. In fact, Hess refused to come out against the anti-labor Initiative until the very last week or so before the elections. This not only strengthened the coalition forces of the Martin Democrats and the Republicans, but prevented the progressives from exposing the reactionary Democrats who were at work within Hess' own machine, in order to defeat him.

The reactionaries, on the other hand, demagogically utilized the progressive traditions of the Republican Party in the state of Oregon. In fact, the Republican candidate for governor, Sprague, came out emphatically against the anti-labor Initiative, and in his statements claimed he was not running against the President and the New Deal.

The Oregon Commonwealth Federation (O.C.F.) also failed to exert sufficient influence to bring together the various progressive forces behind the Democratic ticket. In some respects it even tended towards a simonpure position. For example, it refused to endorse the president of the Portland Central Labor Council as a candidate for the State Legislature.

Equally serious was the failure to develop a struggle around the most obvious spearhead of reaction, the anti-labor Initiative 131, the passage of which already offers a serious threat to organized labor. This should have been the main issue, not only for labor, but for all the people. It provided the fulcrum by which the whole campaign could have been lifted to a higher struggle against reaction, as was demonstrated in Washington and California.

Not only did the progressive forces fail to emphasize this issue, but they also neglected the pension movement in a state where the sentiment for old-age pensions is very strong and where the leadership of the Townsend movement is more influential than perhaps in any other state in the union. As a result, the pension movement, which was tied by Townsend to the Republican Party, served as a major contributing factor to the defeat of the progressive Democrats.

Finally, the Communist Party was not strong enough to wield the necessary influence on the candidates, to arouse them to the weaknesses of the campaign.

Despite the defeat of the progressive Democrats in the state, the Communist Party candidate for state legislator for Multnomah County received about 17,000 votes, more than eight times the vote previously recorded for a Party candidate. How was this possible in a state where the New Deal ticket was defeated? Why did the Party receive nearly 16 per cent of the total vote and one-half of the vote received by the candidates on the Democratic Party ticket endorsed by the O.C.F.? The answer is—the Communist candidate was the only candidate who placed support for the New Deal as against reaction in the very center of his campaign.

Thus, the vote for the Party not only demonstrates that the people want to continue with the New Deal, but it is also an instruction to the programless progressives to work out

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as rapidly as possible a New Deal program and to mobilize their forces in the struggle against reaction. At the same time the vote constitutes a recognition of the Party as an integral part of the growing democratic front movement, and an approval of the general policy of our Party. It is an instruction to our Party to assume as rapidly as possible its full responsibility in the state of Oregon as the vanguard of the progressive forces. It must play a decisive role in preserving intact the forces of the O.C.F. and averting any tendency of disintegration and defeatism.

The importance of our Party, small as it is, in the Oregon election campaign can be seen from the fact that in Multnomah County, in those precincts where there was a Communist Party branch, or even a Communist Party member, the progressives were elected and the anti-labor Initiative defeated. This is the best answer to the vicious campaign already being developed against the Party by the reactionaries which finds an echo among some of the confused progressives, to the effect that it was the Party's support which defeated the Democratic slate.

### WASHINGTON

The defeat of the progressive candidate for mayor and the candidates for councilmen in Seattle was an object lesson to the progressive forces as they faced the fall elections. It was definitely recognized that this defeat was due to the split in the ranks of labor, accentuated by the leadership of Dave Beck and of the Hutcheson clique of the building trades.

The reactionary forces, developing their strategy to achieve a victory in the fall elections, created a coalition of tory Democrats and Republicans which launched a common war on the progressive forces which supported the New Deal. They embarked on a policy of utilizing the split in the ranks of labor to intensify jurisdictional disputes, hoping to arouse public opposition to the labor unions, which are the very backbone of the progressive movement in the state of Washington.

This strategy took the form of introducing in California, Oregon and Washington an Initiative Bill sponsored by the Women of Washington and the Associated Farmers, tools of the open shoppers. The bill would incorporate unions and destroy the rights of labor to strike and picket. But this open shop bill was so coated with demagogic phrases that when it was presented, thousands of workers and their families, disgusted with the jurisdictional disputes promoted by the reactionary labor leaders, favored the Initiative. A public poll about primary time indicated that some 80 per cent of the people favored the measure!

The Washington Commonwealth Federation (W.C.F.) correctly analyzed the tactic of the reactionaries and left no stone unturned to bring about the broadest unity between progressive forces. The first struggle centered around the effort to control the state convention of the Democratic Party. The anti-New Deal forces, led by Governor Martin and aided by the Republicans, sought to control the convention in order to repudiate the New Deal and isolate the W.C.F. from

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the progressive forces within the Democratic Party. Because it was able to establish beginnings of parallel action between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. (thus strengthening at the same time its leadership among the middle class and the professionals), the W.C.F. won control of the King County delegation, almost one-third of the state delegation to the Democratic Party convention. This served as the nucleus for a New Deal majority.

The platform adopted at this convention constituted an unmistakable repudiation of the Martin tories and called for the extension of the New Deal program, both nationally and in the state of Washington. It was the first state Democratic Party platform which pledged support to the President's policy of "quarantining the aggressors," calling for the adoption of the O'Connell amendment. It also called for the defeat of the anti-labor Initiative 130, and at the same time so exposed Martin, that various fence-sitting delegations from farming counties joined the progressive coalition.

Stung by this defeat, the reactionary forces within the Democratic Party organized "Progressive Democratic Leagues" to defeat the New Deal forces in the primaries, centering their attack on the W.C.F., demagogically charging it with being a "Trojan Horse for the Communist Party." Opposition candidates were endorsed and financed through organizations set up by Governor Martin.

Since Washington operates under a blanket primary law, it was possible for the tory Martin to form a coalition with the Republicans against the progressive Democrats in the primaries. The Republicans eliminated rivalry in their own primaries by filing only one candidate for each position, so that they could safely vote in the Democratic primaries for reactionary Democrats.

In order to defeat this coalition, the W.C.F. took the leadership in unifying all the progressive groups behind a single candidate for each office. With the basis established for parallel action between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L., the unity movement broadened. County officials were also united with the progressive front. New Deal groups, progressives and middle-of-the-road elements were joined with the W.C.F. forces. It was of particular importance to get the support of the anti-Martin incumbent county politicians, especially in King County, because of their close relationship to the A. F. of L. leaders.

This unity made possible the defeat of the Martin-Republican coalition in the primaries. The attempt to "purge" the Democratic Party of the W.C.F. candidates was repudiated by the National Committee members, by the officials of the Young Democratic Club, and by the Congressmen. The primary elections saw the most decisive repudiation of Red-baiting and the most ringing defeat of the Martin attempts to control the Democratic Party. The main leaders of the Martin forces were defeated and all the Congressmen were nominated by a sweeping plurality. The progressive forces were also victorious in the election of precinct committeemen in the most populated areas, and wrested control of the State Committee machinery of the Democratic Party from the reactionary forces. King County, the key to the state, was completely

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won by the progressive forces under the leadership of the W.C.F.

The final campaign saw the organized center of reaction in the Republican Party. Its strategy was to concentrate on gaining a foothold particularly in key county positions, as a basis for a return to power in 1940. Its main line was to win over the vast number of confused voters who were dissatisfied with the Martin starvation administration and with many of the county officials who professed to be New Dealers but actually were not. In addition to skillful demagogy, an unprecedented barrage of Red-baiting took place. Stalin and Browder were the most publicized men in the campaign. Only a decisive policy which rejected Red-baiting and which stood for unqualified unity among progressives could have succeeded against these attacks.

The main tactical line of the progressives was to extend unity among the forces of the democratic front. The question before the progressives was how to achieve this unity, how to apply the main tactical line to keep the vast majority of registered Democrats within the ranks of the Democratic Party, and at the same time to keep from sacrificing the very heart of the election campaign, the Tacoma Platform of the Democratic Party.

Thus, the progressives correctly embarked on a policy of "Vote 'em Straight Democrat." The W.C.F. was decisive in putting forward this tactic. Without the W.C.F. and its influence, it would have been impossible to get labor and many of the candidates to accept this slogan. Had it been put forward by the Democratic Party without the W.C.F., it would not have carried the weight with the progressives that it did. That this policy of "Vote 'em Straight" was decisive, was subsequently proved by the election returns. Forty per cent of the King County vote was "straight Democrat," twenty per cent was straight Republican, and the remaining forty per cent was split. Many of the important offices would have been lost to the progressive forces without this unprecedented straight Democratic vote.

This policy of "Vote 'em Straight," however, cannot be used under all circumstances. It may only be useful when the progressive forces have a majority of the candidates on the ticket. The Republicans saw this, and the reactionary press attacked this policy as a "Communist trick, an attempt at Stalinist dictatorship," etc. They suddenly "agreed" with Roosevelt that the elections transcended party lines, and coined an opposition slogan: "Vote straight or get the gate."

As the campaign developed, the office of Prosecuting Attorney became the point of concentration of the reactionaries. All over the state they centered their efforts on the office of Prosecuting Attorney. They varied their campaign appeals in accordance with the local situation. In Seattle they attacked the Democratic incumbent for being "too lax" in law enforcement. In Tacoma they attacked the Democratic candidate as "too strict." Elsewhere they attacked Democratic candidates as "no good Democrats." The reason for this concentration on the office of Prosecuting Attorney showed where the crucial issue lay. Expecting Initiative 130 to carry, they wanted their own people to in-

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terpret it and enforce it. If it did not carry, it was important to control the Prosecuting Attorney's office to make their own anti-labor interpretations of various labor laws.

The campaign for the seats of Congress presented nothing new, except for the spectacular victory of John M. Coffee. In the previous elections, he squeezed through only by the vote given him in King County by the W.C.F. forces. This time, he carried his district in Tacoma by three to one, in the face of the most intensive Red-baiting campaign. This victory for the outstanding progressive Congressman in the state of Washington is in itself proof that the people are not turning away from the New Deal, and that when Red-baiting is met squarely without hesitation and vacillation, the progressive forces are victorious. A similar example is the great plurality of Magnusson in Seattle.

The campaign for state legislators was of crucial significance, since it definitely involved the power of the governor. While the Republicans made gains, it was mostly at the expense of the Martin Democrats. The W.C.F. bloc was doubled in the house and tripled in the Senate, although it fell short of an absolute majority. The danger now lies in the possibility of a continued coalition of the Republicans and Martin Democrats in the state legislature, with the aim of carrying on disruptive tactics, to keep the legislature in a state of constant turmoil, and thus discredit the Democratic Party as a whole. Thus they would shape the public mind for a "harmonious" Martin-Republican victory in 1940. This danger can be effectively met only by broadening the progressive bloc beyond the W.C.F., to include all anti-Martin Democrats on the basis of the state platform of the Democratic Party.

The defeat of the incipient fascist, anti-labor Initiative 130 was one of the most important factors in the campaign. The tremendous vote against 130 in practically every farming county reaffirms completely the Party's estimation of the political character of the farming population. It repudiates the contention that the farmers are reactionary. It shows that the progressive sentiment among the farmers has been underestimated by the general labor and progressive movement. It also shows that unity among the forces of labor—the C.I.O., the A. F. of L., etc.,—will inevitably bring the farmers into the active progressive movement.

### THE TROTSKYITES IN THE SERVICE OF MONOPOLY CAPITAL

The role of the Trotskyites in the election campaign requires special consideration. They found themselves in a peculiar situation. They had to devise new ways to carry out their wrecking and splitting in the progressive movement because there is no Socialist Party existing in this state through which to operate. This forced them to the shelter provided by the reactionary Republicans and Democrats. As the experienced vanguard of the Red-baiters, they pursued a policy of centering the attack on the W.C.F. and the Communist Party.

They set up the stillborn "National Project Workers Union" in an attempt to split the unemployed groups, with money provided by the reactionaries in both major parties.

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Through it, they issued a number of leaflets and bulletins attacking the Workers Alliance as "stooling" for the Administration, attacking the W.C.F. as the "Trojan Horse of the Communist Party, which is seeking to destroy democracy." They sought to secure for themselves a home in the "Progressive Democratic Leagues" set up by Governor Martin, at the same time establishing their own "leagues" as a "Left" camouflage to defeat the W.C.F. and the pro-New Deal forces. Those within the labor movement supported some candidates for county office, hoping that this would split the New Deal forces and labor. This was done in the name of "honest office seekers," as against the "corrupt" ones on the united progressive slate. After the primaries, the Trotskyites moved over in a body to the Republican candidates. They went on the air assailing the W.C.F. and the Communist Party, trying to promote the slogan "Defeat the W.C.F. and the Communists" as the major issue in the campaign.

In Bellingham, they made a third-party move, to stampede the genuine progressive elements out of the W.C.F. and the Democratic Party. The result was a very close race between the pro-New Deal and the reactionary Republicans, with the anti-labor Initiative 130 carrying in one of the most progressive counties in the state. Only in one place did the Trotskyites succeed in electing an incumbent Senator formerly connected with the W.C.F. This was made possible only because the progressives were not equipped effectively to fight Trotskyism as a menace to the forces of democracy. Our Party was not skillful enough in exposing the Trotskyites and the support that candidate received from the reactionary Democrats and Republicans. While she was elected by a narrow margin, she repaid the support of the reactionaries by defeating two progressive candidates. From this it must be concluded that our Party must consistently conduct a struggle against Trotskyism, must learn effectively to expose Trotskyism as a menace to the democratic front and to the progressive movement as a whole. In major party elections, Trotskyism must not be permitted to survive the primaries.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

The struggle for world peace, against fascist aggression, was not separated from the day-to-day struggle in the Northwest. This was indicated by the inclusion of the O'Connell peace plank in the Tacoma platform. The plan provided an effective weapon against local reactionary isolationists. Relating the struggle for peace to the elections also provided additional support from many quarters to such progressive candidates as Coffee and Magnusson. Many sections of the people who were moved by the threat of fascist aggression (and this is especially real in the Pacific Northwest) found their place in the democratic front, thereby strengthening the democratic forces in the election campaign.

These experiences proved that the struggle for concerted action against fascist aggression not only does not "hinder" the struggle against reaction, but, on the contrary, becomes a vital factor in building and broadening the democratic front.

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### NEXT STEPS

The results of the elections have developed a new set of conditions necessitating a re-examination of the position of the W.C.F. While the forces of reaction have not been completely routed from the Democratic Party, and the process of transforming it into a progressive party has not yet been consummated, the fact remains that the W.C.F. has become, especially in the crucial King County area, the dominant factor in the Democratic Party, transforming it into a New Deal organization largely in the hands of the rank-and-file voters.

From an "opposition," the W.C.F. has now become the majority, bearing full responsibility to the people that the New Deal be brought into the state of Washington. While the W.C.F. must essentially maintain its political and organizational independence, to act as the vanguard of the New Deal forces, both within and without the Democratic Party, it now becomes possible to affiliate the Democratic Party organizations to the W.C.F. Thus, sections of the Democratic Party which are beginning to adopt the nature of democratic front instrumentalities can now find their place within the W.C.F., alongside of other progressive organizations—labor unions, Workers Alliance, old-age pension groups, etc.

The objective of building the W.C.F. must be considered on a broader basis than ever before. The task of the W.C.F. is not only to build itself but to maintain and strengthen those organizations that support the democratic front and that were built during the campaign, such as the New Deal clubs, Roosevelt clubs, Jeffersonian clubs, and various other organizations. These organizations sprang up because they felt that the W.C.F. was "too far to the Left." Hence, the duty of the W.C.F. now is to win these organizations, not only asking their affiliation, but also seeing to it that they continue to function and strengthen themselves.

### VITAL TASKS IN THE STRUGGLE

The progressive forces in the state, under the leadership of the W.C.F., have already taken steps to clinch the victories won in the November elections. A broad legislative conference has been called for the purpose of introducing state legislation in line with the New Deal. The progressives are also faced with the task of supporting the struggle for progressive legislation in the next Congress. The reactionaries, defeated at the polls, openly admit that they "have just begun to fight." The extension of labor unity is the main prerequisite for the further development of the democratic front. The W.C.F. and the progressives as a whole will also have to come to the aid of the state of Oregon in developing a campaign to defeat the vicious anti-labor bill there. The labor forces in Washington must realize that the very existence of this bill threatens the life of the unions not only in Oregon, but in Washington as well.

Above all, the progressives must deepen their own understanding of the possible breadth of the democratic front and the wide scope of forces that can and must be won to the struggle against reaction. This requires that the progressives shall place the achievement of this far broader unity in the center of their program,

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jealously guarding against ill-advised Leftist terrors which might alienate any of the potential democratic front forces.

### THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

Basing itself on the decisions of our historic Tenth National Convention, our Party was able to analyze the situation correctly, providing both organization and initiative for the broad democratic front developed in the process of struggle against reaction. Doubling its membership during the year, our Party demonstrated that it was able to become an integral part of the mass movement and continue its growth, although by no means rapidly enough. It extended its organizations into many new farming areas, raised the political maturity of the membership, and consolidated its organization. On the whole, we have learned to function under difficult circumstances more effectively.

But the immensity of the tasks confronting us requires the sharpest examination and correction of the weaknesses which manifested themselves in the course of our work. With the growth of the mass movement, and the participation of our Party within it, far more is required from individual comrades in giving leadership to that mass movement.

There still remains too great a gap between the higher and lower organizations of the Party, with the lower organizations operating largely as a result of pressure from the higher committees, and not acting with sufficient maturity and independence. In turn, there has not developed sufficient criticism from these lower organizations to refresh the whole work and leadership of the Party. Above all, we must keep in mind the words of Comrade Stalin:

> "Contacts with the masses, the strengthening of these contacts, readiness to listen to the voice of the masses—in this lie the strength and impregnability of Bolshevik leadership." *

While our Party branches have made great headway in rooting themselves in the neighborhoods, this aspect of our work still remains far behind the present urgent needs. With the extension of the democratic front struggles to the neighborhood machinery of the major political parties, far more attention must be given to the task of becoming an integral part of the neighborhood and community organizations, while in no way overlooking the role of the Party in the factories and trade unions. As yet, while individual comrades are accepted as leaders of the non-Party organizations, our Party itself does not appear independently in the day-to-day struggles. This makes it far more difficult for our Party to relate the struggle for the everyday needs of the people to the struggle for socialism.

Our Party in the Northwest is becoming a mass Party in the conditions of a maturing democratic front. This requires the application of all our energy to insure an even more rapid growth and stabilization, which must be achieved in constant struggle against formal, mechanical and outworn methods. The search for new methods must be a constant one.

The results of the election campaign point the way to the extension of the role of our Party. In the center

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* Joseph Stalin, *Mastering Bolshevism*, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

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of its work must be the ruthless exposure of the fascist-inspired Red-baiting and its accompanying demagogy which will undoubtedly become even more skillful and intense. Much more decisively than ever our Party must press forward for the unity of the broadest masses in the struggle for a democratic Northwest and a democratic America.

"Labor with a white skin cannot be free while labor with a black skin is branded."—*Karl Marx.*

THE NEGRO
AND THE
DEMOCRATIC FRONT

BY JAMES W. FORD

Price $1.75

"Comrade Ford's book is a real achievement in the forward march of the Negro people. Here, in simple terms, concrete experiences and practical policies, is the democratic front program that will eventually put the Negro masses on the way to freedom. Every member of our Party should familiarize himself with its invaluable contents."—William Z. Foster.

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# AN ANALYSIS OF THE OHIO ELECTIONS—WHAT NEXT?

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

*State Secretary, Communist Party, Ohio*

IN THE numerous recent election analyses carried by the daily press, the state of Ohio has been pointed to as "the average state" which, it is claimed, "shows the country took a swing to the Right and away from the New Deal." There is no denying the fact that the candidates sponsored by the tory reactionary forces were victorious in Ohio as far as the statewide vote is concerned. Not only was the complete Republican state and U. S. Senatorial slate elected, but the Republicans have majorities in both state houses.

These newspaper commentators come to ready conclusions because they see these results contrasted with 1936 when Roosevelt carried the state by a 600,000 majority; or the primary results in August of this year when the infamous Davy was defeated in the Democratic primaries. While it would be wrong to underestimate the tory victory in Ohio, a deeper analysis of the election results is necessary, in order to draw the lessons for the immediate future. Two developments are important in this connection.

1. An examination of the election figures demonstrates that the Republican Party did not win many additional voters, but rather that a substantial number of previous supporters of Roosevelt abstained from voting. This was true in both rural and urban counties. A comparison of 1936 with 1938 voting figures shows the following:

| | DEMOCRATIC | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Gov.* | *Pres.* |
| 1936 | 1,539,461 | 1,747,140 |
| 1938 | 1,147,395 | |

| | REPUBLICAN | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Gov.* | *Pres.* |
| 1936 | 1,412,773 | 1,127,835 |
| 1938 | 1,265,652 | |

A further analysis of these figures, for six industrial counties and six typical rural counties (using the vote for Governor in both years), shows the following:

| | 1938 | |
|---|---|---|
| *Industrial City* | *Dem.* | *Rep.* |
| Cleveland | 216,774 | 152,841 |
| Akron | 56,693 | 49,284 |
| Youngstown | 43,377 | 37,806 |
| Toledo | 45,685 | 59,793 |
| Bellaire | 20,197 | 15,378 |
| Cincinnati | 103,112 | 118,621 |
| Total | 485,838 | 433,723 |
| *Rural* | | |
| Logan County | 4,639 | 8,042 |
| Knox | 5,316 | 7,963 |
| Wood | 6,630 | 13,032 |



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| | *Dem.* | *Rep.* |
|---|---|---|
| Williams | 4,460 | 7,096 |
| Hardin | 6,553 | 7,543 |
| Warren | 4,173 | 7,394 |
| Total | 31,771 | 51,708 |

1936

| *Industrial City* | *Dem.* | *Rep.* |
|---|---|---|
| Cleveland | 220,921 | 234,552 |
| Akron | 80,015 | 52,092 |
| Youngstown | 54,982 | 33,625 |
| Toledo | 68,474 | 60,674 |
| Bellaire | 29,085 | 15,833 |
| Cincinnati | 132,699 | 141,781 |
| Total | 586,176 | 538,557 |
| *Rural* | | |
| Logan County | 6,970 | 8,858 |
| Knox | 7,596 | 8,867 |
| Wood | 11,342 | 13,118 |
| Williams | 5,529 | 7,578 |
| Hardin | 8,055 | 8,150 |
| Warren | 6,650 | 7,873 |
| Total | 46,142 | 54,444 |

These figures show that while the total vote was slightly smaller in 1938 than 1936, the "stay at home" vote was much larger among the New Deal than among the Republican supporters. This is a reflection of the dissatisfaction of large numbers of middle class people, especially farmers, with the New Deal results in Ohio, or of confusion as a result of the terrific bombardment of anti-New Deal Red-baiting which was carried on in the rural communities. These people, in their great majority, did not support Taft and Bricker, but stayed at home demonstrating their dissatisfaction with the New Deal results in Ohio, and also their skepticism with the Tory Republican candidates.

2. The other main development which demonstrates that the people of Ohio have not been won over to a reactionary position is the type of campaign of the Tory candidates. In the first days of the campaign, Taft started out on an open anti-New Deal platform, declaring:

> "Nowhere else is the issue so clearly defined as in Ohio. Our principal opponents, Sawyer and Bulkley, are 100 per cent New Dealers who have never said a word in opposition to the most radical measures of regulation and government spending and do not hesitate to say that they will support whatever policies are proposed by the President. It is not too much to say that the result in Ohio will determine the history of the nation for years to come. If a New Deal Congress is elected, that will assure the passage of every radical measure which so far has been blocked, and would make it exceedingly difficult to effect a change of administration in 1940."

The strategists within the Republican Party were quick to recognize the fallacy of this type of campaign. The *Cleveland News* declared:

> "There are Republicans in the state, particularly in the smaller communities, who are hostile on this question [relief]. We urge them to consider . . . the political facts of the election. If the Republicans are laggard or grudging on this issue, they can whistle for their chances in Cuyahoga County."

While this advice did not help the Republicans in Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), both Taft and Bricker changed their tune and began talking about "agreeing with the social aims of the New Deal" but "differing on its administrative methods." Taft began to champion the Townsend plan and many Republican Congressional candidates openly spoke of the need of an $80 monthly minimum on W.P.A. instead of the present $60. This was the technique developed in the industrial areas, while in the rural communities criticism was made of the farm program of the New Deal and a particularly vicious Red-baiting cam-

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paign was carried on, raising the bugaboo of "the C.I.O. and Lewis domination of the Democratic Party" and "Communist endorsement of Sawyer and Bulkley." It is clear that although the Tory Republicans made important gains, this does not demonstrate that the people of Ohio have consciously and demonstratively gone into the reacionary camp. The *Cleveland Press,* on the day after the election, declared:

> "Mr. Taft helped his cause ... by appearing not as a bucking reactionary, but of the Bruce Barton School of streamlined Republicanism."

NEW DEAL COULD HAVE BEEN VICTORIOUS

The election results could have been different in Ohio. It was possible to unite the anti-reactionary, anti-tory majority and decisively defeat the tory Republicans and their agents, like Davey, within the Democratic Party. That would have been possible on the following basis:

1. If the unity of the farmer and laborer behind the progressive New Deal platform had been maintained. This would have been possible in the first place, if the New Deal had offered a satisfactory program to meet the problems and needs of the farming majority. The weakest point in the New Deal legislation, generally, is the farm program, and the A.A.A. is particularly disliked in Ohio, because of the character and size of farming. The average farmer in Ohio felt he was "let down" by the New Deal, while the worker got all the benefits. This general complaint was accentuated because the conservative New Dealers, Sawyer and Bulkley, felt "everything was in the bag" and it was not necessary to win the farm vote. They depended upon an endorsement of Senator Vic Donahey, himself a middle-of-the-road Democrat, to win the farm vote. To win the support of the farmers, it was necessary to be critical of these particular weaknesses of the New Deal and come out openly for a farm program that answered the needs of the farmer. It was also necessary to expose the fakery of the "Red" issue that was raised in all farm communities.

2. A tory defeat also required still greater trade union collaboration behind the New Deal. While the splitting tactics of reaction were less effective on the trade union field than elsewhere, nevertheless, the fact that important leaders of the Ohio State Federation like Briedenbach, Myers and Dalton campaigned for Bricker and Taft, with unlimited Republican money at their disposal, had some effect. They organized an election organization called The A. F. of L. Affiliates. They circularized all locals. They printed half-page advertisements in all newspapers, they printed their own paper in several million copies for a free distribution, they resorted to forgery of "Communist" leaflets, and committed downright fraud.

Despite the harm of this tory clique of A. F. of L. leaders, labor in Ohio supported the New Deal more unitedly than ever before. The great majority of A. F. of L. local unions declared in favor of the New Deal. Important central bodies, such as Cleveland, Youngstown, Canton, Warren, Columbus, Bellaire, Steubenville, etc., voted down endorsement of Taft and Bricker and supported Sawyer and Bulk-

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ley. Wherever there was a semblance of joint action by the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods, as in Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown and Ohio Valley, there the New Deal ticket was victorious.

A bright spot in the election campaign was the demonstration of joint trade union action in Cleveland when A. F. of L. leaders Murphy and Rorick (teamsters), and C.F.L. Secretary Lenehan spoke at a Labor's Non-Partisan League rally with C.I.O. leaders for the New Deal and trade union unity. A further demonstration of the effectiveness of joint action of the trade unions and placing of issues squarely, was the two to one defeat of the infamous appointive judiciary amendment. Here was an example of unity of labor being the cornerstone of a greater unity of all democratic forces. The state conference against the appointive judiciary amendment called by the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and other progressive forces brought together over 1,000 delegates and helped guarantee defeat of this reactionary measure. It is clear, however, that the lack of complete trade union unity and the vicious campaign of the small tory clique of the A. F. of L. building trades leaders helped to alienate middle class and farming support to the New Deal.

3. An aggressive New Deal crusade was necessary to combat reaction and organize the progressive majority to proper action. Instead, the leading candidates vacillated on decisive issues and allowed themselves to be maneuvered into a defensive position. They did not even take the Democratic state platform, which was on the whole a progressive document, and popularize it. The series of debates between Taft and Bulkley lost votes for the New Deal. Instead of proclaiming the progressive features of the New Deal; instead of pleading guilty to being a yes-man, if by that is meant supporting the Wages and Hours Bill, the Relief and Recovery Bill, the W.P.A., the Anti-Lynching Bill, the Wagner Labor Act and such New Deal legislation which was in the interest of the American people, Bulkley resorted to explaining that he hadn't always supported Roosevelt. Such type of campaigning did not arouse enthusiasm.

### DAVEY TREASON WITHIN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

4. The New Deal camp had traitors within its own ranks. These were headed by the stooge of Girdler, Governor Davey. This Liberty League Democrat who consistently opposed Roosevelt, who fought against every New Deal measure, who starved the unemployed and shot down steel strikers, who sabotaged the W.P.A., and who was exposed for graft and corruption, was defeated in the Democratic primaries. The proceedings of the State Convention of the Democratic Party verified the Communist charge of "Davey and Bricker being twins of reaction."

At that time, Davey proposed "peace" on three conditions: (1) that the convention by resolution approve unconditionally all the acts of his administration; (2) that the platform condemn the C.I.O.; (3) that he be given fifteen minutes at the convention on a statewide hook-up to speak on any subject of his own choosing. These conditions were rejected and

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the Republican Bricker immediately proclaimed: "I think they are purging the best men out of the [Democratic] Party. We want the purgees to come into the Republican Party."

Nevertheless, all the conclusions were not drawn. Daveycrats, some in the positions of county chairmen, continued to stab the New Deal and its candidates after the primaries, and there was hesitation to expose these Daveycrats, who made a 70-30 patronage deal with Bricker after the primaries. This treason within the Democratic Party, and the failure to expose it openly and sharply, contributed to the election results.

5. While an outstanding feature of the campaign was the beginning of independent labor action on the political field through Labor's Non-Partisan League, there were evident certain weaknesses which everyone should note. The primary campaign of Labor's Non-Partisan League against Davey involved more trade unionists and reached higher levels than the final campaign against Bricker and Taft. While the state officers of Labor's Non-Partisan League gave a lead in their radio talks and directives, there was not the same consciousness below. The need of unity between labor and all other progressive forces, especially the importance of labor championing the interests and demands of the farmer and middle class, was not appreciated. The New Deal victories in the majority of the industrial cities, especially Cleveland, demonstrate the growing influence of the L.N.P.L. It is clear that if the issues had been placed sharply, if the demagogy and fake issues of the Republicans had been exposed, if the weaknesses of the New Deal (especially in reference to Ohio farmers) had been recognized, if an aggressive crusade had been conducted by the New Deal candidates, the majority of Ohio voters would have supported Roosevelt and the New Deal as decisively as they did in 1936.

We Communists entered this campaign under the slogan of uniting every progressive and labor force into a great democratic front behind one progressive candidate in order to guarantee the defeat of reaction and its candidates. We worked with all our might towards this aim. We gave the best that we had to further trade union unity, the L.N.P.L. and the unity of the people. We made no special demands, raised no conditions. Our only interest was the interest of the people, the interest of democracy, of true Americanism.

In Ohio, the Communist Party demonstrated its ability to place its candidates on the ballot, but in accord with our primary declaration, we withdrew our candidates, in order to do everything which would help achieve unity of the progressive labor-New Deal front. While withdrawing our candidates, we did not endorse Sawyer or Bulkley, despite the newspapers and the Republican Party. Was our policy correct?

By and large, our policy was correct. Today, it is clear, however, that we should have left at least one state candidate in the field and placed one or two Communists on the ballot in various localities for State Representative or Senator. This would have given our Party branches greater possibilities to conduct an effective election campaign and would also have

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demonstrated our independent strength as a part of the developing democratic front movement. The Party conducted a more effective agitation campaign (radio, leaflets, newspaper, interviews and letters, etc.), than ever before, although there was not enough independent Communist election activity of our branches and individual Party members. There were 800,000 pieces of literature issued, a special election edition of the *Midwest Record* of 40,000 copies and nine radio speeches. The Party, as an organization, had a new and improved relationship with the democratic mass movement and came through the campaign as an organization on a higher plane than ever before.

### PREPARE FOR 1940

The meaning of the election results must be brought to the people. The election results dictate new tasks, to reunite the great majority of the progressive people of Ohio in preparation for 1940. The immediate needs of the moment are:

1. Unity of labor and progressive forces to defend the New Deal legislative program and laws and the gains of labor, especially the wage levels and W.P.A. This should be combined with taking steps to convince the unions of the need of organizing the unorganized, particularly "Little Steel."

2. A new movement for trade union unity, with every local union and Central Labor Council greeting the actions of the C.I.O. convention and such leaders as Tobin at the A. F. of L. convention. Pending national action, local coordination committees of A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad unions, on immediate issues, would be effective.

3. Holding of a statewide conference in support of the New Deal progressive measures, at the time of the convening of the newly elected State Legislature. Such a conference should unite all trade unions together with all other progressive forces. In working out the legislative demands of the Ohio people, special attention to the demands of the farmers is necessary.

4. Preparing *now,* in such cities as Cleveland, Youngstown, Akron, and towns in Ohio Valley, to transform and enlarge the New Deal majorities of 1938 into landslide majorities for progressive municipal administrations and clean out the tory municipal administrations in these cities.

5. To help make possible the general advancement of the trade unions and the entire democratic front movement, intensify the building of the Communist Party in Ohio, reaching our goal of 5,000 Communists in Ohio by January, 1939.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

## A SIGNAL BOOK BY A NOTABLE NEGRO LEADER

*THE NEGRO AND THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT. By James W. Ford.* 222 pp. International Publishers, New York, 1938. $1.75.

THE recent book by Comrade James W. Ford, *The Negro and the Democratic Front,* is a much needed and most valuable contribution to the literature of our Party. Comrade Ford traces not only the development of the struggle for the unity of the Negro people, but the whole policy of the Communist Party in building the democratic front. Every member of our Party and every anti-fascist interested in the preservation of democracy and peace must not fail to read this most timely and authoritative work.

Comrade Ford approaches the struggles of the Negro people as a son of the working people of the South, who has throughout his life been intimately connected with the struggles of the Negro people for liberation.

The plight of the Negro people is in this book revealed to us in all its glaring aspects in the course of the economic crisis. Much as the whites have suffered, the Negroes have suffered far more. Of the approximately 12,000,000 Negroes in the country, according to the 1930 census, the majority are in the South, working on the farms and plantations.

"In 1930," declares Comrade Ford, "there were 40,000 fewer Negro farm-owners than in 1910. Between 1920 and 1930, Negroes lost about 2,750,000 acres of land."

While funds were advanced by the National Farm Credit Administration, little, if any, reached the Negro sharecroppers and farmers. Statistics show that nearly 50 per cent of the Negro workers were unemployed, in 1934, as compared with 20 to 25 per cent of the white workers. Relating these facts to the system of cruel social oppression—discrimination, segregation, denial of civil rights, lynching in the South—one confronts the appalling misery of the Negro people in the United States.

Does the fact that out of 13,000,000 Negroes today, only 56,829 could rise to the status of teachers, that in the whole country there are only 6,825 Negro physicians, lawyers and dentists, confirm the propaganda of Hearst, Hitler and Mussolini, that the Negro represents a lower stage of human development? The fact that more Negroes do not occupy positions in the professions is due, as Comrade Ford shows, to the great limitations placed on their admission to the high schools and universities of the country. Clearly, the reason is not biological "inferiority," but economic super-exploitation coupled with social ostracism.

Similarly, Comrade Ford points out, big capital has not permitted the development of Negro industrial enterprises to any extent, thus holding the Negro people as a whole in an inferior economic position among the population in the United States.

What is the key to this situation? Comrade Ford clearly shows that it lies in the program of the democratic front for the entire Negro people. He stresses the organization of the Negro workers into the trade unions, in unity with the white workers in the industries. He calls for the building of the unity of the Negro people, as part of the democratic front in the struggle for social and national security.

To what degree has this been accomplished? The leadership of the A. F. of L. and the international unions affiliated to the A. F. of L. refused to organize the mass production industries, in which there are hundreds of thousands of Negroes. In the craft unions where they were accepted, they were accorded an inferior status. With the organization of the C.I.O. unions, however, their



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(C.I.O.) leadership took a correct position on the unity of the working class and the struggle against discrimination. Hence, the C.I.O. represents in the main the broad base for the organization of the Negro workers.

The Negroes are organized into church and fraternal organizations, which form the social and political base of their lives. Those who ignore this basic fact of Negro life would make it impossible for the Negro to become part of the broad progressive front in the struggle against reaction. For a time we Communists also suffered from a sectarian approach to this question. However, even before the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, held in 1935, our Party had already perceived the necessity of rallying the Negroes through all their organizations, and of broadening the Party line.

After the Seventh World Congress, when the policy of the people's front was adopted, the Party threw itself in full swing among the Negro masses, cultivating and developing the idea of the all-embracing front of the Negroes as part of the people's front. This took on a very broad form, particularly in Harlem in and immediately after the 1936 elections, with the bringing together, not only of Negro organizations, but also Puerto Rican, Italian and Irish sections of the population, as well as other national groups, in the organization of the Harlem Legislative Conference. This, in 1938, led to the election of Vito Marcantonio to Congress, and of Garcia-Rivera to the State Assembly.

The achievements of the Negroes of America can serve as a guiding line for the struggle of the colored masses all over the world. Yes, what is done in Harlem, as the outstanding political center of the Negro masses, helps to guide the movement wherever the colored people are struggling against imperialism. The unity of the oppressed nationalities in Harlem and the victorious struggle they have recently conducted will serve as an inspiration, not only to the Negroes, but to the national groups in every part of the country.

The Negroes know from their own experience what fascism would mean for them. They have suffered at the hands of the Ku Klux Klan, Black Legion and other such organizations. The heart of the Negro people of the United States went out to the struggle of Ethiopia against Italian fascism. Scores of Negro workers went to Spain to fight for democracy, striking against the same fascist monster which has enslaved Ethiopia. In the greater development of this political consciousness against fascism our Party has played a considerable role, as Comrade Ford's book shows in concrete example.

In bringing to the Negro masses a correct understanding of the necessity of the democratic front against fascism, our Party has had to overcome the nationalist and Japanese propaganda carried on in the United States, which is abetted by the Trotskyites and Lovestoneites. Our Party has also had to overcome the malicious propaganda of the fascists, aided by the Trotskyites, in regard to the peace role of the Soviet government. Increasing masses of the Negro people are gaining the understanding that the Soviet Union is the greatest bulwark of peace, just as it is the only country in the world that has put an end to national oppression and discrimination.

Greater unity is being achieved by the Negro people and their organizations. Comrade Ford analyzes its essential progress and character:

> "Already the Negro people are in motion, in the direction of progress. Great united front organizations such as the National Negro Congress, which transcends old political alliances in order to join forces around basic issues of the entire Negro people—such as those mentioned above—will be an important sector of the democratic front. The significant tendency of the Negro people to break their old political affiliations in support of progressive candidates was demonstrated during the 1936 and 1937 elections." (P. 203.)

*The Negro and the Democratic Front* is a handbook of the struggles of the Negro people as part of the struggle of the entire American people for liberty. It is a work that shows the stamp of an outstanding leader of our Party, of the Negro masses, of the whole democratic front movement in the United States.

Within our Party there are developing more Comrade Fords, who, together with the white leaders of our Party, are showing the

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way for the whole American people. As Comrade Ford says:

"The times call for new John Browns, Abraham Lincolns, Frederick Douglasses, Sojourner Truths and modern Abolitionists. Our people are not lacking in modern figures of this type. Thousands of Angelo Herndons are coming forward." (P. 136.)

* * *

It is the task of every Party member and advanced worker to study *The Negro and the Democratic Front,* to digest its wealth of material and fortify himself with a better understanding of the Negro question, of the rich Negro tradition of struggle, in order more effectively to help weld together the Negro and white masses in the democratic front on the path to Negro national liberation, on the path to socialism.

Let us bring before thousands of Negro and white workers this impressive message of Comrade Ford:

"If my oppressed race has accomplished so much, are the possibilities not vastly increased by the building of a democratic front which will extend their rights and opportunities?

"As a Communist, and above all as a Negro Communist, I see that there is only one solution to the problem facing the working class of America, the progressives and the Negro people. That solution lies along the road I have indicated—through the forging of the democratic front against fascism and the extension of that front until it reaches the goal of true democracy which is socialism." (Pp. 206-07.)

ISRAEL AMTER

# LATEST BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

SOCIAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY, by *Earl Browder,* Workers Library Publishers, New York ..... 5c

PROCEEDINGS, TENTH STATE CONVENTION, COMMUNIST PARTY, NEW YORK STATE.

NOTRE LUTTE POUR LA PAIX, by *Maurice Thorez,* Editions Sociales Internationales, Paris.

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY? by *Howard Selsam,* International Publishers, New York ..... $1.25

NAZIS IN THE U.S.A., by *Stefan Heym,* The American Committee for Anti-Nazi Literature, New York .... 10c

THE SUGAR ECONOMY OF PUERTO PICO, by *Arthur D. Gayer, Paul T. Homan, Earl K. James,* Columbia University Press ..... $3.75

THE NEGRO IN THE CIVIL WAR, by *Herbert Aptheker,* International Publishers, New York ..... 10c

SLAVE INSURRECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1800-1865, by *Joseph Cephas Carroll, Ph. D.,* Chapman & Grimes, Inc., Boston, Mass. .. $2.00

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**Amter, Israel**—Democratic Front Moves Ahead in New York, 909-18, October; May Day—in Peace or War? 334-8, April; Work Among National Groups—a Central Communist Task, 722-31, August.

**Baker, Rudy**—The Communist Party in China's War for Liberation, 1009-18, November; The Fall of Wuhan and Prospects of China's Victory, 1114-20, December.

**Bassett, Theodore**—"White" South and the People's Front, 369-80, April.

**Bedacht, Max**—I.W.O.—Workers' Fraternalism, 541-52, June.

**Bentley, Anne**—From the Tribunes of the Socialist Fatherland, 1000-08, November.

**Berry, A. W.**—"Reconstruction, The Battle for Democracy," by James S. Allen. Review (with J. W. Ford), 188-92, February.

**Bittelman, Alex,** see also **A.B.**—A Historic View of the Struggle for Democracy, 711-721, August; Some Problems Before the Tenth Convention of the Communist Party, 624-29, July.

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